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The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection of Gender, Class and Religious-Ethnic Affiliation in the Marginalisation of Hazara Women in Pakistan

Sadiqa Sultan, Maryam Kanwer and Jaffer Abbas Mirza

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Summary

The literature on the Shia Hazara persecution mostly focuses on the killings of Hazara men and little attention has been paid to the impact of religious persecution of Shias on Shia Hazara women. Therefore, this paper explores the experience and marginalisation faced by Shia Hazara women since 2001 in Quetta. It contributes to understanding the unique vulnerability of Shia Hazara women within the larger Shia community by: (a) comparing Shia Hazara men with non-Hazara Shia; and (b) through a participatory ranking exercise to gauge the frequency and occurrence of the issues faced by Shia Hazara women belonging to different age groups. The paper concludes that the intersection of gender, religious-ethnic affiliation and class aggravates the marginalisation of poor Shia Hazara women, making them more vulnerable within the Shia Hazara community and having to deal with layers of discrimination in comparison with Hazara men and non-Hazara Shia. As a result, they face limited opportunities for education and jobs, restrictions on mobility, mental and psychological health issues, and gender-based discrimination.

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Abbreviations

FC	Frontier Corps
FGD	focus group discussion
FoRB	freedom of religion or belief
IED	improvised explosive device
LeJ	Lashkar-e-Jhangvi
NGO	non-governmental organisation
SBK	Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University
TTP	Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan

1 Introduction

The Shia Hazaras in Pakistan are one of the most persecuted religious minorities. According to a 2019 report produced by the National Commission for Human Rights, a government-formed commission, at least 509 Hazaras have been killed since 2013 (NCHR 2018: 2). According to one of the Vice-Chairs of the Human Rights Commission Pakistan, the country's leading human rights watchdog, between 2009 and 2014, nearly 1,000 Hazaras were killed in sectarian violence (Butt 2014). The present population of Shia Hazaras is the result of three historical migrations from Afghanistan (Hashmi 2016: 2). The first phase of migration occurred in 1880–1901 when Abd-al-Rahman Khan came to power in 1880 in Afghanistan and declared war against the Hazaras as a result of a series of revolts they made against the regime. The Hazaras fled to Pakistan and Iran as both countries border Afghanistan (*ibid.*: 10). Most of the Hazara refugees fled from Malistan, a district located in Ghazni province of southwest Afghanistan, to Quetta, the capital of Balochistan province, which is roughly 595km from Malistan. The second influx

of Hazaras into Pakistan occurred during the Saur Revolution (1978) led by the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan (*ibid.*: 11). The final migration happened in the 1990s, particularly when the Taliban took control of Afghanistan in 1996. As the Taliban were openly against Hazaras, mainly due to their Shia faith, many Hazaras fled to different parts of the world including Pakistan (*ibid.*: 12).

The Taliban declared jihad against Shias. During one of the searches in Afghanistan, the Taliban instruction was to 'kill them [Hazaras] as soon as they opened the door' (Sheridan 1998). In Pakistan, anti-Shia violence dates back to the 1979 Iranian Revolution when the Pakistani military, with the help of Saudi funding, formed Sipah-e-Sahaba (literally translated to 'Soldiers of the Companions of the Prophet') to contain the influence of the revolution (Rieck 2016; Fuchs 2019). However, violence against Shias intensified as soon Pakistan became an ally of the US in its 'war on terror'. Many religious militant groups saw Pakistan's support to the US, particularly the crackdown against al-Qaeda in northern parts of the country, as a reason to wage war against Pakistan and its people. This was the beginning of a series of attacks against Shias (including Hazaras) across Pakistan.

The first major attack[1] occurred in July 2003 when militants belonging to Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), an anti-Shia terror group affiliated with al-Qaeda, attacked a Shia Hazara congregation on Mechangi Road in Quetta and killed 53 Hazaras, leaving 65 injured (*Hazara.Net* 2003). In September 2010, a Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP, a Pakistan-focused religious militant group) suicide bomber attacked an al-Quds rally (pro-Palestine rally organised on the last Friday of Islamic Ramadan), killing 73 Shias, of whom 53 were Hazaras (CNN 2010). In September 2011, LeJ militants killed 29 Hazaras in Mastung, Balochistan, singling them out from a bus carrying them to Taftan (Baloch 2011). One of the deadliest events was the twin blast in January 2013 on Alamdar Road in Quetta, which killed at least 100 Hazaras and injured more than 120 (Boone 2013). The following month (February), another blast occurred on Kirani Road, near to Hazara Town, killing at least 84 people, mainly Hazaras (Dawn 2013). The last major attack was in 2019 when an improvised explosive device (IED) planted in a vegetable box killed at least 20 Hazaras and injured more than 40 people (Shah 2019).

For LeJ and the TTP, the killing of Shias is necessary to make Pakistan 'pure' from 'heretics'; therefore, they consider that the extermination of Shias 'from every city, every

[1] Though Hazaras have continuously been facing violence since 1999, i.e. periodic targeted killings (gunning down Shias) and suicide bombings, we are considering 'major' attacks as those in which at least 20 Hazaras were killed. However, due to space constraints, even presenting all the attacks resulting in over 20 casualties is not possible; therefore, we highlight only a few of them.

village, and every nook and corner of Pakistan' is necessary (Adams 2014: 14). A letter sent by LeJ to Hazaras in 2011 stated: 'All Shias are worthy of killing. We will rid Pakistan of [this] unclean people' (Peer 2013). The period between 2003 and 2014 was the deadliest for the Hazara community as most of the attacks occurred during this time. Hazaras were an easy target for terrorists as they are more recognisable due to their Mongolian physiognomy compared to non-Hazara Shia who share common racial and ethnic origins with Sunnis. As a result, the Hazaras were left with no option but to leave Quetta and they migrated to other parts of the country. According to one estimate, between 2009 and 2014 around 30,000 Hazaras migrated from Balochistan (Butt 2014). Those who did not migrate ghettoised themselves in two areas of Quetta, i.e. Hazara Town and Mari Abad; and since the provincial government could not protect them, to leave these two areas meant inviting death (Kermani 2017). However, this self-ghettoisation was not enough and the community was targeted inside Hazara Town in February 2013.

There is also a view, shared by some members of the community, that Hazara killings are a shield to hide and divert the focus from the Baloch insurgency which has been going on in the province since the 1950s. According to this account, the Pakistani military use LeJ and pretend (to show the world) that the only issue in Balochistan is religious extremism (*Balochistan Post* 2019a, 2019b) and also suggest that groups such as LeJ are used as 'death squads' against Baloch insurgents (Houreld 2013). For example, Ramzan Mengal, the leader of LeJ and the key figure in the persecution of Hazaras, who confessed to the killing of 'tens of Hazaras' (UK Home Office 2019: 26), was freed and allowed to contest elections in Balochistan (Hashim 2018). Members of the Hazara community often raise the question of how militants easily manage to attack Quetta, which is an army cantonment, while the residents are stopped and harassed at checkpoints. Checkpoints are mostly military or paramilitary check posts/entry points which were deployed after 2003 when the law and order situation worsened. Although they were meant to 'protect' Hazaras, these checkpoints have become a source of daily harassment and humiliation for the community. Hazaras are routinely searched and asked to show their identity cards and to state the purpose of their visit, despite knowing that they are returning to their homes (NCHR 2018: 6). Particularly for the checkpoints that lead to Hazara localities, entry will not be permitted if a local Hazara does not come to receive the visitor. Living in the secluded space is suffocating for the community as the restrictions on their mobility limits their options. One Hazara stated: 'Violence here has come down, but we can't go anywhere else in the city. We can't do business anymore. We're living in a cage' (Kermani 2017).

A significant amount of the literature on Shia Hazaras in Pakistan and Afghanistan focuses on migration and diaspora studies (Monsutti 2004; Changezi and Biseth 2011; Ibrahimi 2012; Hashmi 2016) and on the formation and evolution of Hazara religious and political identity (Radford and Hetz 2020; Olszewska 2013). Recent studies also cover the impact of sectarian violence on the community in Quetta (Adams 2014; Azhar 2013; NCHR 2018; Dedalus 2009; Ahmad Wani 2019). However, most studies on sectarian violence, particularly against Hazaras, have paid little attention to the impact of violence on Hazara women and the subsequent effect on their vulnerability. Therefore, this study begins by addressing the following question: How does Shia persecution particularly affect poor Hazara women in Quetta? This key question is asked to determine the specific consequences of the sectarian violence against the community that may shape and influence the everyday lives of Hazara women.

This further leads to exploring the internal nuances and complexities within the Hazara community by juxtaposing Hazara men and women. For example, is there a different level of suffering between Hazara men and Hazara women? Hazara men, being the main target of militants, have suffered the most. However, the challenges that women have faced – such as being widowed, restriction on mobility, and the issue of 'honour' for young Hazara girls – have largely remained unaddressed. While some level of gender-based discrimination is no surprise for a semi-tribal and disadvantaged region of Pakistan, it is vital to understand how Hazara women also face gender-based discrimination by Hazara men. A lot of this discrimination is security induced, where cultural norms that regard women and girls as the honour of families intersect with increased insecurity in the wake of terrorist attacks on the community and the consequent threat of physical and emotional harm to females. This cross-comparison helps to demystify the intricacies within the persecution of the Hazara community where both men and women, particularly the latter, face specific gender-related challenges which the previous feminist, gender-based violence and freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) scholarships have not covered.

The research questions informing this critical enquiry are:

- How does Shia persecution particularly affect poor Hazara women in Quetta?
- Is there a different level of suffering between Hazara women and non-Hazara Shia women?
- Is there a different level of discrimination based on different financial backgrounds?
- How does the ghettoisation of the Hazara community affect Hazara women from socioeconomically excluded backgrounds?
- Does the securitisation of the Hazara locality create further challenges for the Hazara community, specifically women?

Therefore, this research investigates the effect of securitisation, or policing, on Hazara women; for example, how it has limited the prospect of job opportunities and restricted mobility for Hazara women, and how it has affected their intra-mobility between Hazara Town and Mari Abad, the two main Hazara localities in Quetta.

This paper also examines the distinctiveness of Hazara women's vulnerability by comparing it with non-Hazara Shia in general and women in particular. This helps to explore some of the key enquiries such as: (a) would Hazara women face the same challenges had they been living in big numbers in some other cities, i.e. Karachi and Lahore? or (b) do non-Hazara Shia women face similar ordeals that Hazara women undergo? By addressing these two questions, this study elucidates the significance of spatial belongings and distinctive facial features in the marginalisation of Hazara women from non-Hazara Shia. The overall purpose of this study is to contribute to our understanding of the marginalisation of religious groups by looking into the intersection of gender, religious identity/affiliation, and class. The questions which this study put forward will help to highlight the layers of marginalisation that Hazara women face and inform about the nuances within the persecution of the Hazara community.

Four main sections follow this introduction. Section 2 elaborates the methodological approach, context, and dynamics of the Shia Hazara community and selected neighbourhoods, i.e. Hazara Town and Mari Abad. Section 3 presents the quantitative data that illustrates overall findings collected through participatory ranking exercises. It highlights the main issues spotted and ranked by Hazara women and their frequency. Section 4 deals with the qualitative findings which analyses the context in which the participants categorise the issues/challenges and reflects on their responses and explains the distinctiveness of Hazara women from Hazara men and non-Hazara Shia. Section 5 concludes.

2 Methodology

According to one estimate, there are 0.6–1 million Hazaras in Pakistan (UK Home Office 2019: 7). Hazara populations are scattered in Karachi, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Lahore. Around half a million Hazaras live in Quetta, Balochistan (*ibid.*). The majority of the Hazara population adhere to Shia Islam and there is a small section of Sunni Hazaras as well. Sunni Hazara women and girls have not been included in this research for the following reasons: (a) they have assimilated into Sunni populations, live in their neighbourhoods (as opposed to the Shia Hazara who live in distinct enclaves of their

own), and are considered a part of the Sunni majority population because of their shared sectarian identity; (b) they do not face additional discrimination for their ethnic or sectarian identity, though they constitute the lower middle class and have huge economic challenges; and (c) though they have the same Mongolian facial features and can be identified physically as Hazaras, they have not been a target of terrorist attacks in Balochistan.

In Balochistan, located in the southwest region of Pakistan, Hazaras lived in both Baloch and Pashtun-populated districts of Khuzdar, Harnai, Zhob, Loralai, Dukki, and others. But due to continued violence and targeted attacks, most Hazaras from the Baloch belt shifted to Quetta.

They have been chosen for the purpose of this study because they comprise the biggest concentration of Hazaras in Pakistan. Historically and gradually, Quetta is the cultural, political, and anthropological hub of the Hazaras in Pakistan. Nearly half a million Hazaras are concentrated in Hazara Town and Mari Abad, the two Hazara enclaves located in the eastern and western areas of the city. The population size has allowed the Hazaras to practice their culture and organise themselves politically. The biggest Hazara religious congregations and rallies take place in Quetta. The only political representatives of Hazaras in the provincial and national assemblies come from the Hazara neighbourhoods of Quetta. Additionally, they make a valued contribution in the civil service and to sports in the province. Hazaras in other regions and cities of Pakistan are low in numbers and have not been as visible culturally, politically, and religiously as in Quetta.

Mari Abad is the oldest Hazara locality in Pakistan while Hazara Town started developing in the 1990s as a result of population growth. Mari Abad is surrounded with rugged tall mountain ranges on two sides, an army cantonment on the third side and is connected to the main city on its fourth dimension. Hazara Town is located along the western bypass and is surrounded by Pashtun and Baloch populations. There is a 12–12.5km route connecting the two neighbourhoods.

Hazaras commute to both enclaves on a daily basis for work or to meet their extended family. Hazaras in Quetta do not own agricultural, industrial or commercial lands, and a vast majority of them rely on government/private sector jobs while the remaining bulk are either unskilled labour or they have small businesses. Most of the population comprises middle-class or lower middle-class families with the exception of a very small number of families who are either pre-partition migrants or have more than two family members working abroad.

Prior to the wave of violence against Hazaras that started in 1999 by sectarian terrorist outlets backed by the state, Hazaras had a fair share in the local city markets. They owned shops and businesses, and were making advances in socioeconomic indicators (FGD 3). As the Hazara businesses were attacked, the majority of them winded up and either left the city altogether or shifted the business within Hazara enclaves. It is for the same reasons that tens of thousands of Hazara fled the violence and migrated to Europe, Australia, and other parts of the world. This diaspora is important for the financial survival of the community in the form of remittances.

Hazaras have cordial relationships with the non-Hazara population of the city that are mainly either Bloch or Pashtun, and have social, business and work ties with them. However, there is an exceptionally low (almost zero) trend of intermarriage between Hazara and non-Hazara ethnic groups. Even if someone chooses to do so, it is disapproved of by the community. One of the main reasons for this is sectarian identity as the non-Hazara ethnic groups hail mainly from the Sunni sect.

Mari Abad and Hazara Town are not the wealthiest enclaves in Quetta but are (particularly Mari Abad) one of the most advanced and highly organised localities in Balochistan in terms of education levels, urban administrative mechanisms and cleanliness.

2.1 Research method

The research study used a participatory ranking methodology called Pile, Rank and Analyse (PRA). The PRA participatory research technique explores and identifies problems/challenges with the participants. Once participants have identified all the challenges (piling stage), each is either written on a piece of chart paper or associated with an object present in the surroundings, depending on the nature of the participants. These items and/or pieces of paper are then placed in the centre without any order. Then each participant is invited to put the items and/or pieces of paper in an order of high preference (ranking stage). The ranking is then analysed for trends, frequency, and preferences of each individual and groups, and all the nuances evoked (analysis stage).

The ground researcher (one of the authors) hails from the Shia Hazara community, was born and raised in Quetta, and is part of the generation of Hazara in Quetta that has experienced and witnessed terrorism since her teenage years. She has a Peace and Conflict Studies background with majors in Critical Terrorism Studies and Peace Education. Her very choice of peacebuilding as a career and mission is driven by the violence against Hazaras and other secluded communities. She has a personal journey of surviving the emotional and mental trauma of terrorism. She was transformed from

someone who loved nature as a child to a hardcore nationalist during her teenage years and early twenties in response to violence, and then back to a humanist in her late twenties through undertaking peace trainings. The researcher is critical of the status of religious freedom in Pakistan and reads the violence against Hazara as sheer oppression.

The involvement of a such a researcher, who is not only trustworthy but also shares similar experiences in life, empowered the participants with ease of communication as they felt they were being heard by someone who understands the entire context and has strong feelings about it. From the participants' deep insights and breadth of sharing in this study one can tell that they did not have to make an extra effort to convince themselves or the researcher that their experiences were important.

The researcher is cognisant of her biases. She knows that belonging to the community being researched is likely to instill trust in the participants and it opens the window for exploring nuances and analysis of matters. At the same time, she is also aware of the natural instinct to push one's own views onto participants or the research findings. Knowing the whole bias complex and making a conscious effort to minimise this, therefore, has been helpful to keep the entire process as objective as possible.

The other two authors of this report, based in London, were also aware about reflexivity and how their own positionality shapes this research. Since they both belong to the Shia community and have had first-hand experience of witnessing Shia persecution in Pakistan, they felt a connection (politically and emotionally) with the research participants. Having a history of political activism, they are also cognisant of their political biases and interpretation of events and history. While writing this report, all three authors of this paper have remained mindful of their religious identity and presented the data and findings in the best possible objective manner.

Following PRA, the researcher engaged participants in focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews through guided questions, where they explored the challenges experienced by the Shia Hazara– particularly Shia Hazara women – in the thematic areas of education and health, economic conditions/livelihood, safety and security, and religious freedom. Once the participants had identified and discussed these themes at length, the researcher piled all the challenges written on separate sheets of paper. Then each participant was invited to rank these challenges as per their experiences. The researcher found that ranking done individually by each participant, rather than in groups, gives the participants more independence of choice and they are less influenced by others' preferences. As part of the ranking, each participant mentioned the reasons why he/she placed a particular challenge at a certain rank. The ranking was recorded separately for each individual involved in the FGDs and interviews.

Later, aggregate ranking was calculated for each group (teenage girls, young women, women, and men only) to better analyse preferences in terms of what challenge(s) affected their lives and wellbeing the most. Most of the participants were from the lower end of the socioeconomic strata of the Hazara community in Quetta, for economic hardship constitutes additional layers of vulnerability within the already persecuted community.

A total of 44 Shia Hazara participants, male and female, were engaged in this research study. Female participants were divided into three different age groups; namely, teenage girls (below 16 years, the youngest being around 14 years old), young women (age 16–35), and women (aged 35+). This grouping is aimed at helping identify the specific challenges of different sections/age groups of Shia Hazara females and analysing the preferences of ranking these challenges. The fourth group was Hazara men only. Age-wise, this group was made inclusive of teenage boys, young men, and men aged 35+ to make it representative with respect to the three female age groups. The aim was to identify the challenges of Shia Hazara males in the aforementioned themes and compare them with those identified by the women.

Table 1: Number of participants and their age groups

Groups	Female	Male	Grand total
Teenage girls (FGD 4 and FGD 6)	11		11
Young women (FGD 1 and FGD 2)	13		13
Women	8		8
Men: mixed age group – teenage, youth, and adults (FGD 3 and FGD 5)		12	12
Total	**32**	**12**	**44**

Source: Author's own.

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the operational structure of the study was modified to better adhere to physical distancing to reduce the risk of virus infection. The number of FGDs was increased from four to six and participants were divided into groups of six, instead of 12 as originally proposed: two each with teenage girls, young women, and men only. Eight women aged 35+ were interviewed instead of being engaged in FGDs as originally planned, because this category had women above the age of 50, who were more at risk of contracting the virus than others due to their age. This particular change proved to be a clever design decision. All of the eight women interviewees were from families of martyrs and, except for one, they were either 'illiterate' or had a basic education. They were more comfortable and forthcoming when interviewed individually as they had more sensitive and personal stories to share. Had they been engaged in a FGD, it would have affected their level of sharing or they may have been influenced by what other women in the group shared.

Geographically, Hazaras are located in two neighbourhoods: Mari Abad and Hazara Town. The researcher made sure to equally engage people from both neighbourhoods, and thus three FGDs were conducted in Hazara Town and the other three in Mari Abad. Five interview participants were residents of Mari Abad and three belonged to Hazara Town.

2.2 Challenges

The research study aimed at engaging the lower strata of the Hazara community including families of the martyred, women-headed families, people with special needs, families with a current or prior drug addict member, women who work outside the confines of the Hazara neighbourhoods, women who are engaged in either business or sports (both are still a heavily male-dominated realm), and poor families who do not have their own house or survive on minimum daily wages. The reason for focusing on this specific strata is that these community members are more vulnerable than the rest of the community, and are less represented in other investigations/studies.

Once they had been identified, the challenge was to convince them to participate in the research. The more vulnerable they were, the more reluctant they were to participate. One of the main reasons for their unwillingness was fear of their personal details and pictures being made public. Some of the participants put it straight: 'I can be part of this study only if I am not photographed nor my name used'. Therefore, any names used in this document are pseudonyms. They were oriented in detail over the phone or in some cases one-to-one visits were made, and assured that no photographs would be taken if they were not willing and their personal details would also not be made public. However, the researcher's identity, both her gender and ethnicity, was vital throughout this study.

Because she belongs to the same community and speaks their language, she was not considered as an 'outsider', and therefore was welcomed by the participants. Also, as a woman, she managed to mobilise the Hazara women and was able to bring them to venues to take part in the FGDs, which otherwise would have been a difficult task in a male-dominated religiously conservative society where women are usually not allowed to participate in such activities, i.e. interviews.

There is a sense in the Hazara community that their voices are unheard. Therefore, whenever Hazaras are given a safe space and a chance to talk about their challenges, they tend to share nonstop. With five to seven participants, FGDs went on for as long as three hours.

The computational aspect of ranking was a challenge. Since individual ranking is comprehensive and involves free will to choose and rank, it was applied both in FGDs and interviews. But when it came to show the collective trends thematically and by age group, it got complicated, and more time and effort was necessitated to figure out the best way to get the job done. The researcher decided to keep the same gender and age groups for analysis, and also to keep intact the 15 thematic areas that came up in the study. Eventually, computational formulas were sought to best represent this data.

Managing social distancing to lower the risk of Covid-19 contraction was challenging. Standard operating procedures were followed, including physical distancing, use of masks and sanitisers, and providing takeaway refreshments. Women older than 35 years were interviewed so that they did not join a gathering of even six people.

In addition to the computation of the individual rankings for group and aggregate ranking development, the number of participants in each FGD was different, i.e. five at the least and there were eight one-to-one women interviewees. It made a difference when drawing comparisons between same age group FGDs conducted in different localities or between two gender groups. This was taken into consideration when looking at other reasons for the ranking differences.

3 Quantitative data

A total of 44 participants – 32 females and 12 males – were engaged in the study, 43 of whom participated in the ranking. The ranking was done using disposable plates and chart papers for the teenage girls, young women, and men's groups while objects present in the surroundings, such as a glass, notepad, and jug, etc. were used for the

women's group. All 43 participants did the ranking individually. Their rankings were processed in Excel through ranking scale and aggregate ranking was produced for analyses in respective groups of teenage girls, young women, women, and men (see Appendix 1).

In the ranking scale for each variable, every ranking entry was multiplied with the number of preferences out of 15 variables and totalled at the end. For instance, Table 2 shows how education has been ranked (out of 15) by participants of the teenage group.

Table 2: Ranking formula example

Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5··· Rank 13	Rank 14	Rank 15
2	4	1	3	0··· 0	1	0

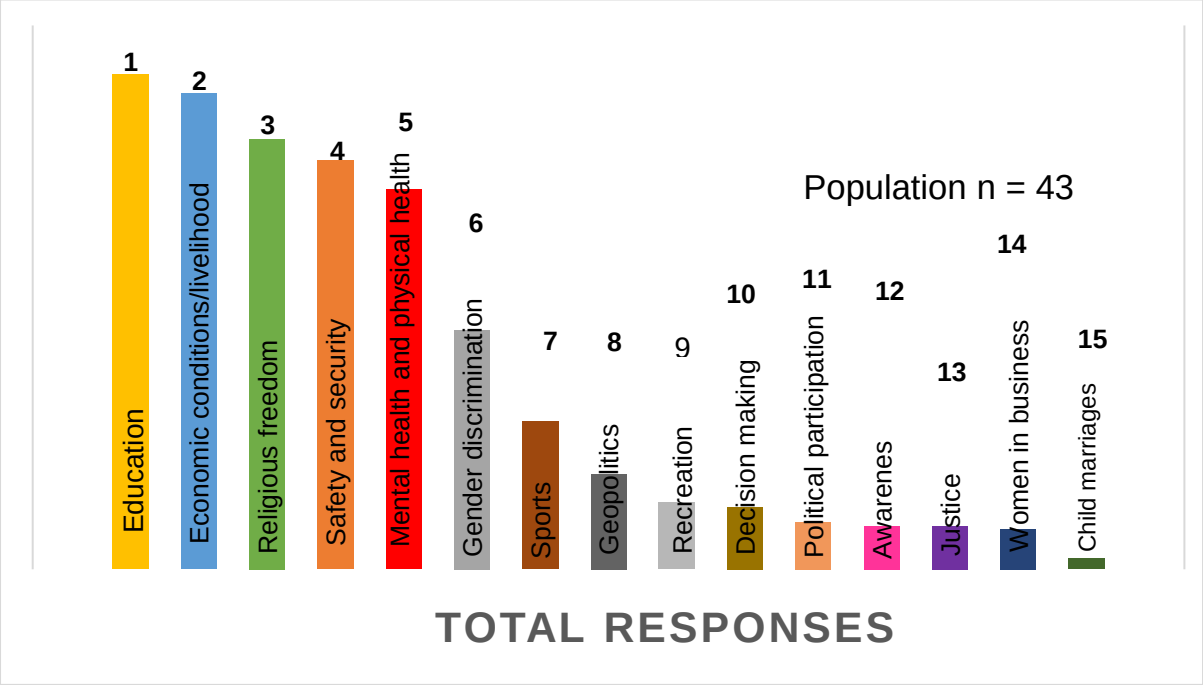
Source: Author's own.

The aggregate ranking value through ranking scale for education for this group would be calculated as, 2*15+4*14+1*13+3*12+0*11... 0*3+1*2+0*1 = AB. The same formula was repeated for all variables and thus, as per the final score, the aggregate ranking was generated. The graphs that follow have been generated using the ranking scale formula.

3.1 Aggregate ranking

Figure 1 shows the 15 challenges or themes identified by participants in discussions and interviews. These thematic areas are aggregate of all six FGDs and eight interviews, and not all FGD or interview participants identify all 15 of them. Instead, they identified and ranked up to seven themes deemed most important to them.

Figure 1: Total responses



Source: Author's own.

Education stands at the top in the aggregate ranking of all 43 participants. Challenges related to economic conditions and livelihood have been placed second while religious freedom takes third rank. It is interesting to note that safety and security is fourth while it was at the top for both men's FGDs. Fifth position in the order is occupied by mental and physical health while gender discrimination is ranked sixth. The theme of sports was raised by young women and girls and is ranked seventh. Geopolitics was termed and identified by the men in FGD 1 conducted in Hazara Town. Since all seven participants (all men of different ages) ranked it top, in aggregate it stands at eighth. Recreation, decision making, political participation, awareness about the causes of persecution, demand for justice, women in business, and child marriage are ranked at nineth, tenth, and fifteenth, respectively. Child marriage was brought up only twice, surprisingly once in a men's FGD and the other time in an interview with a woman who was an early marriage victim.

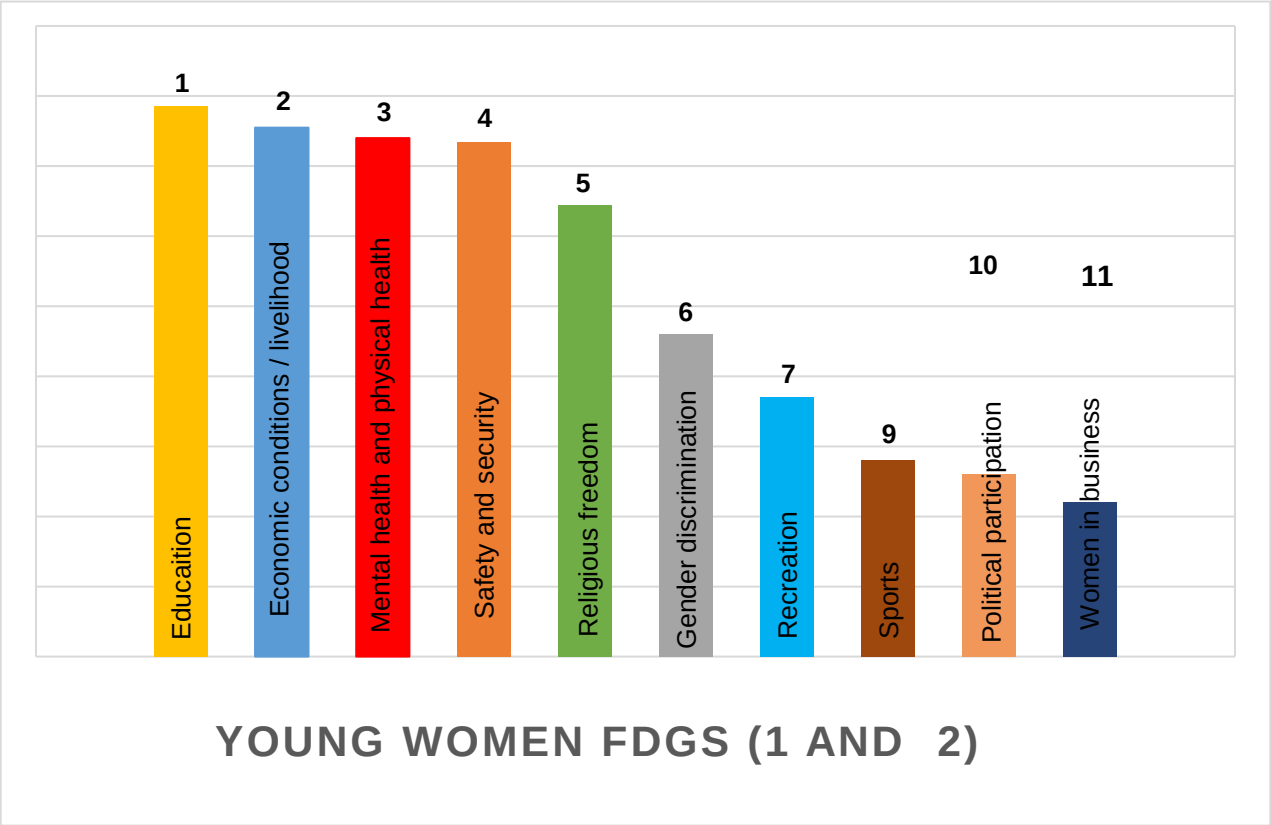
4 Qualitative findings

The top six of the 15 themes in the aggregate ranking have been more thoroughly analysed and represented through separate graphs. It is important to note that these average frequencies in every group are based on the total number of participants and

whether they have identified the theme as a main challenge or not. There were seven participants in FGD 1 (young women), six in FGD 2 (young women), seven in FGD 3 (men), six in FGD 4 (teenage girls), and five each in FGD 5 (men) and FGD 6 (teenage girls), while eight women were interviewed. This slight difference of attendance may appear as a variation in addition to the choices/ranking made by the participants. In some cases, a group has not identified a theme as a main challenge for reasons to be discussed later in this paper and therefore, the graph appears flat.

4.1 Education

Figure 2: Aggregated responses of FGD 1 and FGD 2



Source: Author's own.

Education remained at the top in aggregate ranking and was ranked highest by the young women in Hazara Town -(FGD 1 and FGD 2) and teenagers in Mari Abad (FGD 4 and FGD 6) and women aged 35+ (see Figure 2). Quality of and access to education both physically and financially, and security issues are some of the main challenges related to education mentioned by the participants for Shia Hazaras, particularly for women in Quetta. Teenage participants who were students complained of discriminatory attitudes in educational institutes both by non-Hazara and non-Shia teachers and students.

While Hazaras are proponents of girls' education, they are also faced with extreme forms of violence and terrorism that have influenced their priority of education for females. In a

tribal context where a female is considered as the 'honour' of the family, it is difficult to allow them to go to faraway places – either in or out of the city – for education amid the fear of violence and harassment. A sharp dropout rate was noted for students in the tertiary level after the university buses were attacked. This is because not many parents are mentally ready to send their daughters out of Quetta for their education and nor can every family afford the finances of such an arrangement. The option for girls is either to study in a nearby institute or simply drop out.

Participants also shared that cultural and family pressure exacerbate their miseries. Most of this pressure stems from security issues. Parents and male members of the family, including brother, uncle, husband or sometimes even a son, worried for the safety and security of their female family members and would go to the extent of restricting their mobility where they deemed necessary. People other than the immediate and extended families also play a role in creating such pressures in the form of moral policing. Such a regime expects a good woman or girl to avoid all activities or going to places that can create any sort of security threat for her.

Besides security, one of the reasons behind the significant presence of Hazaras in urban centres such as Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad is the unavailability of quality education in Quetta. Balochistan has one of the lowest indicators for education in Pakistan. According to one report, there are 25.02 million children out of school across Pakistan and Balochistan has the highest proportion, i.e. 66.1 per cent (Alif Ailaan 2014: 16). Another report reveals that, on average, primary schools are 30km apart; there is a middle school every 260km, and there is a distance of 360km between high schools (Maqsood 2020). As the provincial capital, Quetta is considered to be in a better position than the rest of the province. Yet there are only three main universities in Quetta. All three of them have been made inaccessible for Hazaras as the student buses for the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS) and Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University (SBK) were attacked, and the University of Balochistan is considered a no-go zone for them as many people from their community have been attacked and killed there by terrorists. One young woman participant succinctly explained the underlying issues in the education system:

> *My educational career was ruined since I didn't experience the same quality education here in Quetta as Karachi. Now, if I talk about education in private institutes, there is no educational atmosphere here nor quality education; teaching staff is inexperienced, teachers must be experts and well trained in their respective fields so they can deliver something worthy to students. Students' future depends on teachers and teachers are*

> *responsible for their success. Private schools in our area – with no offence – hire teachers with no professional degree, pay them the minimum wage so, how come we expect them to teach well or educate well?* (FGD 1)

A teenage girl recalled her days when she was studying and the lack of modern education facilities:

> *Those two years of college were very tough for me. Secondly, talking about Quetta's educational circumstances, we girls can barely pursue our field education here due to less quality education* [than other provincial capitals in Pakistan] *in our respective fields. Quetta for MBBS/BDS* [medical and dentistry] *studies is not recommended due to fewer facilities. And it is hard for our parents to let us plan to pursue studies out of Quetta as they cannot trust the people out of home for their daughters.* (FGD 6)

The effect of violence is ubiquitous in almost all aspects of Hazaras' lives, particularly regarding access to education for girls. Historically, the education ratio was once considered to be much higher for Hazara girls than Hazara men (Changezi and Biseth 2011: 83). In fact, the Hazara community is considered by many as one of the most progressive in Balochistan because it has made girls' education a priority. However, security threats in the past two decades have restricted educational opportunities for Shia Hazara, particularly for girls and women. During the discussion some of the participants estimated that around 80–90 per cent of higher education students dropped out of universities after university buses carrying mostly Hazara students were bombed in 2012 and 2013 (IBTimes UK 2012; *Al Jazeera* 2013). The abysmal law and order situation made it extremely difficult for Hazara girls to get an education outside of their Hazara-populated towns. One participant informed that:

> *Due to* [the] *unfavourable security situation, mobility is restricted for both men and women equally. Hazara women working or getting education out of our areas face the same problems as Hazara men. Many of the families don't allow their younger male members to go out of the area. If they go out by chance, everybody starts making phone calls to ask if they are well.* (FGD 2)

And those who travelled outside Hazara areas shared that they had to face an extra layer of policing. Initially, when these check posts were installed around all the major gateways to Mari Abad and Hazara Town, the Frontier Corps (FC) guards (a paramilitary

force) on duty were non-locals and were noted for inappropriate behaviour with people in general and women in particular. All Hazaras – male and female – need to pass through one of these check posts either to enter the city areas or to go home. With vehicles carrying women, the guards often take the opportunity to intimidate them by looking at them steadily and intently. Sometimes the women would be asked irrelevant questions just for the purpose of buying time to look at them. Most of the women would not talk about it owing to power imagery attached to the FC and some internalised it as if it is normal and acceptable to be harassed at check posts. Only a few would share their check post ordeals; for example, a teenage participant said:

> *While travelling to the Cantt* [military cantonment] *area where our college was situated, we used to face issues to get through the check post on the way to college daily. Even though everyone in our vehicle including the driver held a Cantt pass and we students had student cards, they checked us individually on a daily basis. We had to get checked on both the checkpoints. Therefore, we would be late for college daily. If the college starts at 8.30am, we must leave home at 7am to arrive there as soon as possible. If we forget to bring our Cantt passes, they will not let us enter. And we had to miss our classes that day. This behaviour was seen and experienced by* [the] *Hazara community only; I could not see another vehicle to be checked strictly or ill-behaved or teased on check posts.* (FGD 6)

One of the alarming trends we noted among the teenage FGDs is the presence of discriminatory attitudes towards Hazara girls in educational institutes. For example, a girl in FGD 6 shared:

> *As a student if I talk about my experience, I have seen much discrimination towards Hazara students in all institutes both in and out of our area. Whether it is curriculum or extra-curriculum activity, Hazara students face huge discrimination by teachers and management. We are not given equal opportunities of growth and development in all institutes. Our talent, hardworking nature and being Shia (our sectarian identity) are some reasons behind why we face discrimination and majority would not let us get success. Because we are Shia, how would a majority tolerate a minority's success?*

Sham-e-Ghariban is the evening of 10th Muharram when the surviving family and companions of Husayn ibn Ali were held hostage by the forces of Yazid. The day of 10th Muharram is called Ashura and the evening is called 'the evening of strangers', named after those who were helpless on the plains of Karbala. Shias turn off lights on Sham-e-Ghariban to aesthetically create a sense of mourning or sorrow. However, among Sunnis, there is a widespread stereotype that Shias hold orgies on Sham-e-Ghariban. One girl shared her experience of Sham-Ghariban:

> *One day I came face to face with my Islamiat* [Islamic studies] *teacher. She was herself Sunni and asked who is Shia* [in the class]*? I responded that I am Shia. She then asked me a strange question that at the night of Sham-e-Ghariban, why do you guys turn off the lights? Then there was another friend in the class who said that 'we have heard that Shias are very intelligent and educated'. Our teacher then replied, 'If they were educated, they would not have been Shia.* (FGD 4)

Hazaras are discriminated against by non-Hazara teachers and staff even in their own areas, which were supposed to be safe spaces for them:

> *As a student if I talk about my experience, I have seen much discrimination towards Hazara students in all institutes both in and out of our area. Whether it is curriculum or extra-curriculum activity, Hazara students face huge discrimination by teachers and management. We are not given equal opportunities of growth and development in all institutes. If we particularly talk about the college in our own area, Mari Abad, we again see the same situation. The atmosphere is no better for Hazara students even though they are the majority, but they are discriminated against.*

Some participants, including teenage girls, mentioned open discrimination on sectarian grounds by both teachers and fellow students. 'There were a lot of misconceptions and misinformation about us. We had to undergo the burden of defending our sectarian identity', shared Rizvia. Some would hide their identity knowing that revealing it would only increase their hardship. One of the Hazara men in FGD 3 also asserted that even the educated segment of society holds a discriminatory attitude towards his community:

> *I will give you some examples of the time when we used to go to university. When we were in schools, we had never heard slogans like 'Hazaras Kafir' or 'Shia Kafir'* [infidels]. *We used to go and play with the Pashtuns. But when we went to university, even their*

> *educated class, even on the walls of their mosque, it is written: 'Kafir Kafir, Shia Kafir'. We expected that we would not be tortured at least among the highly educated people by the slogans like 'Hazara Kafir' or 'Shir Kafir'.*

Persons with disabilities within the community undergo another layer of discrimination and therefore have even less access to education and health facilities. One young woman claimed that people with disabilities face more challenges compared with people without special needs:

> *Differently abled persons had more difficulties as compared to normal*[2] *people with no visible disabilities during the pandemic. Families too wanted to cure them at home instead of taking them to hospitals as hospitals are not well equipped with all facilities for persons with disabilities. I too preferred to stay at home and get treatment because of unavailability of facilities at hospitals. On the top of being a person with disability if you are a Hazara and Shia, it restricts everything from mobility, to access to education, health and other facilities.* (FGD 1)

As evident from Hafisa's testimonial, people with special needs suffer because of the system's negligence of their needs. Consequently, any activity or engagement involving people with special needs costs more in terms of resources and time. Being a Hazara person with a disability in Quetta means that they are not only neglected by the system for basic needs, but are also targeted for their sectarian identity and facial features. If the disabled person is Hazara *and* female, then honour issues arise as well. For example, mobility in Quetta is restricted and difficult for all Shia Hazara, but for a Shia Hazara disabled woman it is a dream to go to an educational institute or to a hospital for treatment without going through extreme mental pressure as their slowness makes them even easier prey.

4.1.1 Comparison with Hazara men and non-Hazara Shia

Security is a buzzword for Hazaras no matter what aspect of their life is under study. Education and mobility, of course, are no exceptions. The violence against the Hazara community in general has created various obstacles for it. Although the number of Hazara casualties is way higher for men than for women, we have noted an unexpected

[2] This was the language used by the participant; however, the authors acknowledge that this is a harmful term as it positions disabled people as 'other'.

trend where parents have put more restrictions on girls' mobility in comparison to that of men and boys as there is more pressure on girls and women to be morally upright. Mobility remains one of the key challenges, as discussed during the FGDs and interviews by almost all the participants. The reason it is not part of the ranking is because it traverses across all the themes. As discussed above, people feel insecure if they leave the Hazara areas even for daily chores or religious rituals. Gul Jahan, an elderly Hazara woman whose young son was killed by terrorists a few years ago, described her suffering:

> *I always feel insecure while leaving the community, I pray to God before leaving. Also, I do not travel in a transport owned by someone I am not acquainted to. My son go for religious rituals and I have never stopped him in month of Muharram, I feel much fear of losing my other sons but I keep a little amount of money to give it to a needy and recite some holy verses before he leaves home for Ashura Procession and Majalis* [gathering]. *I think that we are not superior to Imam Husayn* [ibn Ali abi Talib] *to fear our death and stay home on the day he got martyred. I have no idea of other cities; I even have never been to Mari Abad or Bazar in Quetta. I do not go to the bazaar as I do not have an identity card, I cannot speak their language, so I have no exposure.*

One participant said that parents are overprotective of their daughters as they are concerned about their security. Another participant shared about how an incident of a photograph on social media restricted her educational aspirations: 'If the situation didn't get that worse those days, I would have gone for higher education'. Posting photographs of young women on Facebook is a trend amongst teenagers and young adults in the community: usually it is a boyfriend/male friend who posts the photograph as an act of revenge or punishment after a breakup. Sometimes, female friends post photographs over small disagreements with the aim of shaming and punishment. Although this trend prevails in all urban and semi-urban regions of Pakistan, it is taken more seriously in areas where elements of ethnicity, sect and related in-out group dynamics add to the complex, such as Quetta.
One teenage girl explained this trend in more detail:

> *We face discrimination in our educational institutions, both girls and boys. But talking about families, the situation is different for boys. Boys are supported and trusted more than girls to pursue their education or career in any city, but girls are not supported.*

> *Not because they do not trust girls; in fact, they don't trust the outer environment to be safe for their girls. Parents think that any environment is friendly and adjustable for boys but not for girls.* (FGD 6)

It is considered normal for boys to be raised rough and tough to prepare them for interacting in a world full of injustice and pain, while girls are expected to deal with emotional and mental hardships; girls are not meant to confront what men are already fighting for and with. This is the paradigm that informs parenting in the Hazara community, particularly after the worsening security and violence against them. Though men face harassment and abuse too, for women it is a matter of their honour and cannot be tolerated at all.

A similar proposition shared by another participant in the same discussion group:

> *Perhaps it is threat, threat of life, honour, and respect that restrict most of the parents to support the idea of going out of the city for education or job purposes for their daughters. Parents think of their safety and security; therefore, they cannot trust other cities as they are bigger and more populated than ours, security measures are more considerable and vulnerable in bigger cities. Parents believe that being a girl, they may face threats in other cities more than our city. In a male-dominated society like ours, women are not safe.* (FGD 6)

However, some responses inform that there is something beyond parents' overprotectiveness of their daughters. Girls are restricted from getting an education because externally, Shia Hazara women have to face persecution by terrorists and internally, they are confronted with protective and restrictive norms by family and community. While girls' education is not opposed in the community, still girls do not receive equal treatment with regard to getting an education outside the Hazara community schools and colleges as parents feel it is less safe to send girls out in comparison with boys. One of the Hazara teenagers shared:

> *The main reason is the family; most of the parents do not allow their daughters to go out of Quetta for higher education or job purposes. Education till college level is somehow manageable for females here in Quetta, if they want to pursue higher education or any job, they have less opportunities here.* (FGD 6)

Another Hazara teenager explained that:

> *Even if the girl wants to get further education or pursue a career, she continuously faces pressure from her family to get married as soon as possible. If a girl is supported for higher education, she is never supported for making her career as they are considered to have household responsibilities only. Making a career or earning is considered as a male's job not a female's. Families degrade girls to be responsible for family finances.* (FGD 6)

One male participant also admitted and corroborated the teenage girls' testimonies on the unequal treatment of girls within the community, and other men in the same FGD strongly agreed with him.

> *Females have issues of even severe nature, coupled with security threats. As people tend to send their boys to the best schools and institutions, but when it comes to their girls, they are simply made to graduate from an ordinary institution, and parents think their duties end when their daughter gets married. In our family, all my three sisters were not sent to school, but only me. This tendency comes because of the tribal system we used to have where there were fixed roles for members of a group.* (FGD 5)

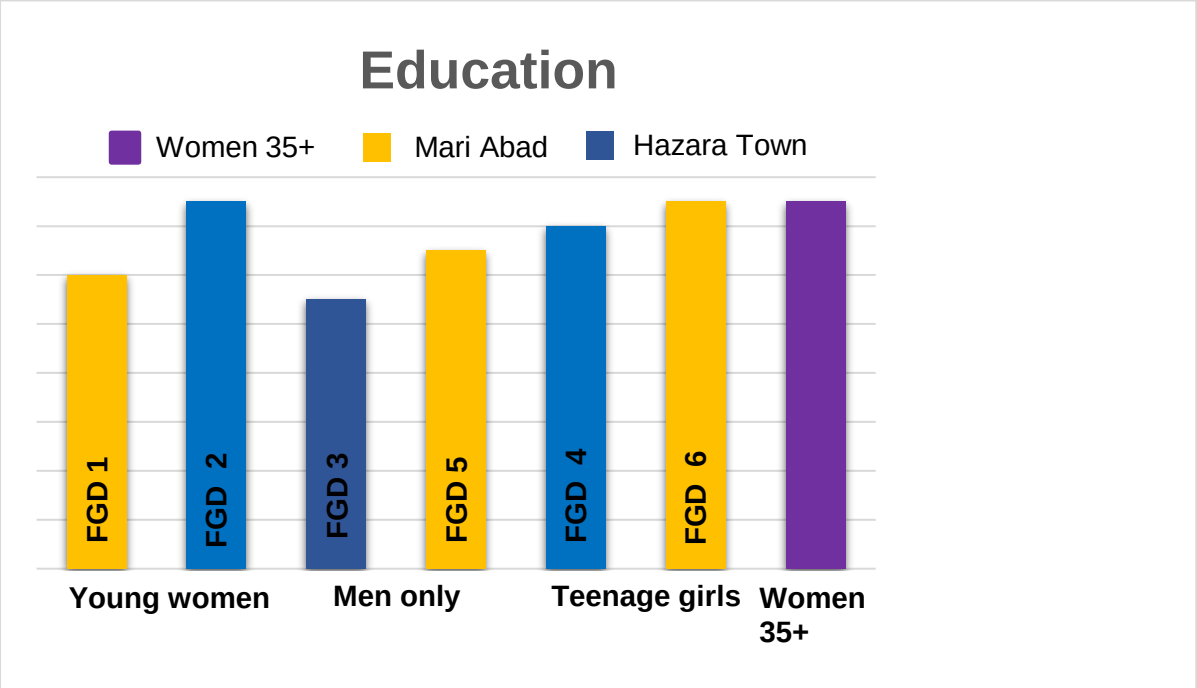
While Hazaras are advocates of girls' education, it is important to understand some nuances when extreme lack of financial resources or fear of dishonour to the family come into play. In such a situation, the limited available resources are allocated to a boy's education, which is considered to cost less both emotionally and financially. For instance, a boy can take public transport, can stay at a cheaper less safe place, and if harmed, he would not bring shame to the family. Whereas the same scenario is unsafe for females, particularly young girls. That is why parents feel more comfortable sending their daughters to the institutions located inside Hazara Town and Mari Abad. Therefore, girls from extremely disadvantaged Hazara families have to study in a local university that bears no comparison with those in Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi. Parents who cannot afford the financial and emotional toll of this process tend to persuade their daughters towards marriage so that they can at least accomplish some of their parenting duties, if not education.

There were mixed views among the community on comparing vulnerabilities of Hazara and non-Hazara Shia. Interestingly, many women who were interviewed separately and some of the teenagers and young women in the FGDs offered no information or view about the persecution and discrimination of Shias outside the Hazara localities. This was

mainly because either they had had less exposure to this behaviour or had not been exposed to it at all. Exceptionally, some women opined that non-Hazara Shia are facing more persecution and are being killed in Karachi and Parachinar, two cities with dominant vocal non-Hazara Shia populations in the South West and North West of Pakistan, respectively. The Shia population in these two cities have also experienced extreme forms of violence. However, there seems to be a consensus among teenage girls, young women, and men that non-Hazara Shia are not as vulnerable as them in terms of access to education for two reasons. First, the law and order dynamics are comparatively better in other cities and therefore, accessing higher education is more feasible. Shia Hazara who have migrated to Lahore or Islamabad, for instance, experience fewer security issues as the rule of law there is better in general, and also persecution of Hazaras outside of Balochistan would not be as beneficial politically to the terrorist outfits backed by the state. Second, there are more colleges and universities in these cities than in Quetta, where there are only three public universities.

4.1.2 Reflection

Figure 3: Aggregated ranking of all participants on education



Source: Author's own.

As is evident from the testimonies above and illustrated in Figure 1, education has been ranked at the top or the top three. The reason is that Hazaras not only understand the importance of education but also consider it as the sole defining factor for their socioeconomic development. In the context of the Hazaras in Quetta, it needs to be understood that they do not own large chunks of agricultural or commercial lands, nor do

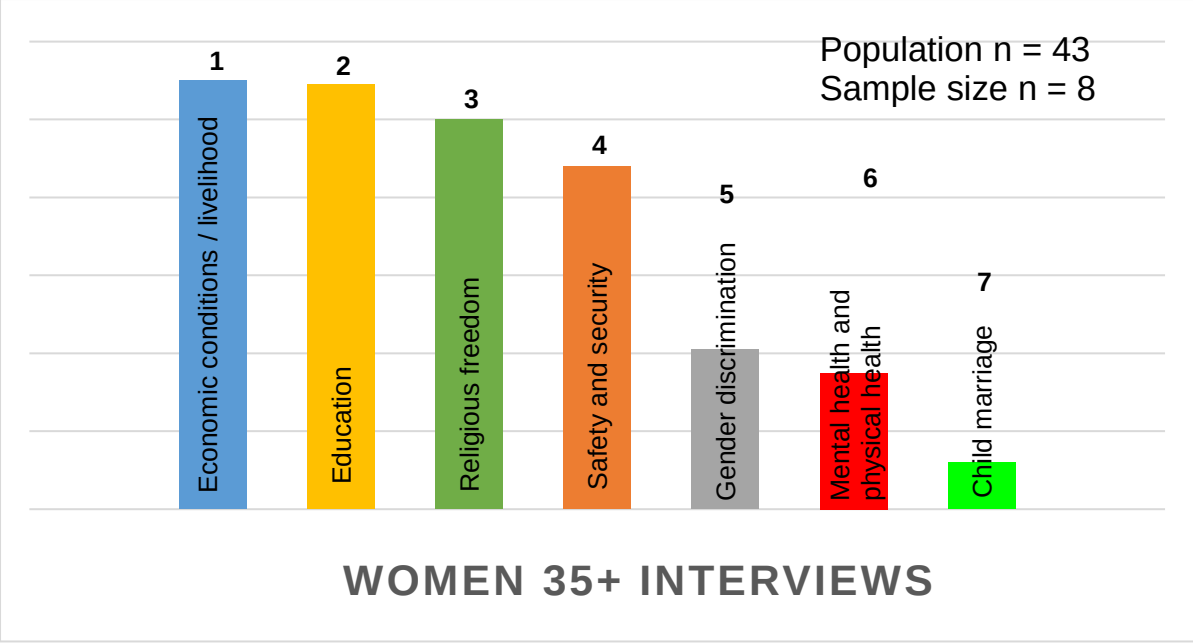
they have big businesses in the province. Education, therefore, provides a hope to be recruited in government or private sector jobs. Restricting educational opportunities already means even more hardship for the community as the people would have meagre subsistence options left. This is exactly why most of the women participants who have lost their breadwinner to terrorism, ranked education at the top. A single mother whose husband was killed in sectarian violence shared:

> *I will choose education, because if I were an educated single mother, things would be different maybe not this much challenges as it is now. Now I fear if my children would bear my fate, if they also remain uneducated. I think education is very important. I really like to send my children to get education.*

Comparatively, Mari Abad shows better development indicators including education facilities (at least up to high school level) than Hazara Town. Therefore, young women from Hazara Town ranked it at the top. For other FGDs such as men in both enclaves, teenagers in Hazara Town and young women in Mari Abad, the slight decrease in ranking can, for instance, be explained by there being a smaller number of participants in the FGD or that safety and security is regarded as more important for men.

4.2 Economic conditions/livelihood

Figure 4: Aggregated responses of women aged 35+ in the interviews



Source: Author's own.

Economic conditions and livelihood are ranked second in aggregate ranking by all 43 participants. Women groups have placed it at the top, all the participants being women-headed families – either the husband or son had been martyred in terrorist attacks or they were victims of early child marriage. This group was the most vulnerable in terms of finance and the women depend solely on aid provided by charities and individuals. Their only hope was education (ranked second) for their children. They acknowledged that access to higher ~~quality~~ education – both financially and physically – was a major challenge for them.

The overall security situation has severely affected the economic conditions of the community permanently. Although both men and women experience lack of job opportunities due to restriction on mobility, security risk, stereotypes against the community, and because the presence of Hazaras places non-Hazaras at risk of violence. Private sector organisations either released or denied hiring Hazaras as they believed that their office or vehicles could be targeted if a Hazara was there. Students who used to ride in university buses together with Hazara students refused to travel with them after the buses were attacked and demanded a separate bus.

For Hazara women, the challenges are double as they also face discrimination at the hands of the community in the form of moral policing and tribal honour that prevents them from exploring job and work opportunities. This also encompasses searching for jobs, going to work, and interaction with the non-Hazara population. A woman who defies this norm has to either create strong support at home or bear the brunt of being followed to work, harassed on online platforms, or sometimes face physical harm. Gender stereotypes and patriarchal norms create hurdles for those women and girls who choose to work on premises in the Hazara areas. One young woman in FGD 1 mentioned some of the key reasons why females are not visible in the public sector:

> *Females cannot avail more opportunities in the public sector. And females are restricted by family members as well to avail opportunities outside the community. Females have more harassment threats. If they are late for coming home, there is not any issue but coming home late for females is a great issue and problem since they are responsible for family name. Males have more job opportunities as well because they are not bound to go for jobs somewhere far away from our own area, they are free and permitted.*

One interviewee, Bajjia, a widow and mother of three children who now is the head of the family, explained how the community reacts towards those women who choose to work:

'Within the community it is difficult, as people would create rumours about us being at the workplace'. She shared how difficult it is for a widow to raise children:

> *Earlier on it was fine, as people would assist us, but with the passage of time such assistance gets less in number. His* [my husband] *presence is being missed, as life is exceedingly difficult to live, and to raise children. We are thankful to the Shaheed Foundation that looks after us; they pay school fees and monthly expenses for us. But, because of inflation, it is way too difficult to manage the affairs. When you do not have a defender* [man in this case] *then one has to hear people talk, if someone, especially a male, pays a visit for help, people then start talking* [questioning the woman's character] *but we have to live with such attitudes.*

In addition to Bajjia's comment about rumours associated with working women, the challenge seems even bigger for Shia Hazara women. One teenager in FGD 6 shared a similar testimony that explains the dilemma Hazara women face in this regard:

> *Some parents might support and show some appreciation for daughters to work but majority of them don't, they believe that people will start gossiping about their family if they allow their daughters to earn and support the family financially. It is a big question mark on their dignity and pride when daughters earn a living for them.*

The idea of shame and honour associated with women and the stereotype that a working woman brings shame to the family's name is also something quite common in the community that restricts women from becoming financially independent and pushes them towards further marginalisation. A young woman in FGD 2 shared her experience of when she decided to work due to her family's financial situation:

> *In 2004 my father passed away after an accident. I was a kid then, a schoolgoing kid, so I had to continue my studies and part-time job side by side to support my family financially. I used to work with the polio vaccination team and other small social groups working on different projects. And eventually years later, I started working with an NGO, so people said so many things to my mother to compel her to make me leave. They said because I was working in an NGO with non-Hazara, I will be a big shame for my family and community one day. Therefore, my mother used to advise me to take care of family name and respect. From 2004 to 2009, I had to go through the same things on a daily basis, an*

> *NGO's van used to come at home for pick and drop. That too was not acceptable for people living in our neighbourhood. They started gossiping about my character as I worked with a non-Hazara organisation. Against all these talks and gossip, my mother and brothers supported me, and I never cared about people much even though we lived in a joint* [extended] *family system.*

4.2.1 Comparison with Hazara men and non-Hazara Shia

Women and girls suffer more due to the patriarchal norms and defined gender roles. They are dependent on the male family members for their financial needs. Even in households without any male members, women continue to be dependent on society and bound to adhere to the cultural norms that have restricted their freedom. Women are heavily discouraged by the security situation and social norms, and they face heavy criticism if they work – even within the confines of the Hazara areas. Men and boys suffer too but differently as these same culture norms put more pressure on them to be the breadwinner of the family, and due to there being no or limited jobs available, they suffer too. However, should women want to help or share the burden, there are still challenges for them, as one teenage girl in FGD 6 pointed out:

> *As I see, there are complications for both boys and girls when it comes to finding a job with their educational degrees in hands because, here the job market is not too vast to produce many job opportunities for university graduates. When we see the situation of finding a job without degrees, boys don't face many problems, they can be a shopkeeper, they can be a cobbler, a mason or work in a workshop, but girls cannot perform these jobs in our society. Girls are restricted and bound in this regard; therefore, they face much more economic problems.*

Participants across gender and age groups thought that non-Hazara Shia have better economic prospects than Shia Hazaras. The main challenge remains the restrictions on mobility due to the security situation for Hazaras. It becomes almost impossible for Hazaras to go outside the Hazara area as they are easily pointed out due to their distinct features. Many Hazara government employees in high positions have resigned from jobs when the Hazara target killing was at its peak from 2011 to 2015. Most of the Hazara businessmen also closed down their businesses, and youth stopped applying for jobs owing to fear of being killed. Meanwhile, the rest of the city was normal for people hailing from non-Hazara ethnic and non-Shia sects. One male participant informed how the deteriorating security situation resulted in the loss of jobs:

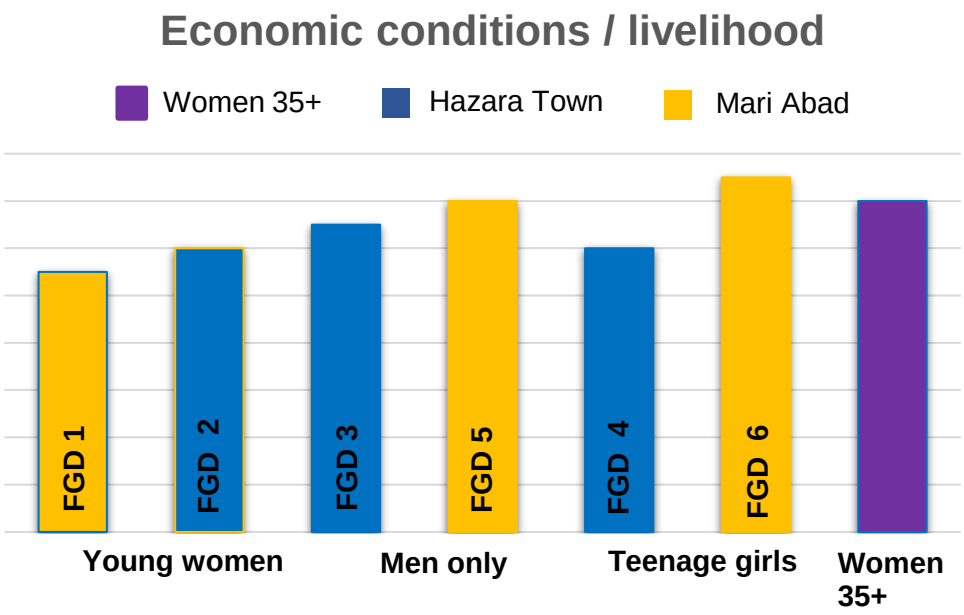
> *Economically, if I talk of myself, I cannot afford to go everywhere in Quetta city, my brother has forbidden me from going outside Hazara Town, no matter what salary you are offered. I want to do MPhil; I cannot take the risk of going to Balochistan University. Hazaras working at the University have left their jobs.*

As noted earlier, there are cultural and societal barriers for Hazara women, and Hazara men have different kinds of obstacles. One young woman in FGD 2 shared her view on how the financial pressure faced by men as the sole breadwinner is leading them to develop psychological issues:

> *We all have multiple layers of pressure and stress in this situation; business and economy are severely affected as well. A Hazara man has more pressure than a woman as they are the supporter, guardian and earner of the family. They are responsible for family's financial matters; when they cannot do anything to support the family financially, they suffer from a lot of psychological issues. Every family on average has minimum six to seven members dependent on one male member, they are grown up with the same mindset that they must feed their families as they are the only support system of the family. They are pressurised much more than females.*

4.2.2 Reflection

Figure 5: Aggregated ranking of all groups and women aged 35+ interviewees on economic condition/livelihood



Source: Author's own.

Though livelihood is important for all the groups under study to survive, men and women groups have ranked it high. What is most interesting here is that the teenagers in Mari Abad have given the highest scores to economic conditions in comparison with the teenagers in Hazara Town, even though none were engaged in full-time jobs or business. Coming from the lower middle class of the community (Mari Abad), they realise the importance of getting a job whereas the teenagers in the other group have relatively less economic hardship.

Although the whole community suffers from poverty, stress, and fear, the sequence of discrimination against poor Hazara women and what they go through on a daily basis is disturbing. For the eight women we interviewed who have lost their husbands/support because of targeted attacks, shelter and higher house rents remain a key challenge. These women placed it at the top and attached most of the challenges they face to financial and economic dependency. Women-headed families in such situations are at the worst risk of extreme poverty. Gul Jahan, a bakery owner shared: 'I have seen so much. I am burnt from within and yet have to continue to provide for my children and two grandchildren whose father was killed a few years ago'.

Having spent most of the income/aid money on house rent, there remains little to cater for basic needs. As Gul Zehra described:

> *Shelter is the biggest challenge for our survival. Home and rent is a big problem particularly in this period of lockdown, I have to pay 20,000 PKR* [£93] *each month to the owner of the house. Rent is the harshest challenge. With the handful earnings of my work I fail to keep saving for children's education, health, and leisure.*

Most of these women who have lost their main breadwinner and depend on aid money, have little access to health, maternity, and self-care facilities. As one female participant said:

> *I can recall the day after my husband had been killed, I was nine months pregnant. I felt a severe pain in my belly, so I visited a doctor, and she asked me to go to the labour room for delivery as my baby was going to give birth. I did not have any money to pay the bill and other expenses, so I came home with a heavy heart. My daughter was born at home a few hours later when I got home from hospital.*

She further shared how low-income/meagre resources affected their interaction and socialisation within the community. She was full of emotion while sharing:

> *There are many problems and issues in going to market if the situation gets adverse anytime. For me, as a single parent, it gets harder to fulfil my kids' expenses. Whenever there is any family function, my children like others demand for new clothes, shoes, and other stuff. I avoid going to market for shopping, but I cannot afford the prices of stuffs available in neighbouring shops as well. Sometimes I wish the relatives would not invite us to their functions to avoid the tension of not having new clothes or shoes.*

Another elderly woman, Hosna from Hazara Town, who lost a son to violence and has two sons who are daily wage earners, informed us how difficult it is to access higher/tertiary ~~quality~~ education for her youngest son:

> *Recently, I dropped my son out of private school as they demanded Rs. 6,000 for his online classes and I was not able to pay his fee as during the pandemic, both my sons were at home and jobless in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak.*

Rizvia, widow of a martyr, compared different classes within Hazaras on economic hardship, and explained how violence and consequent restrictions have adversely impacted the poorest of the poor in the Hazara community:

> *Those who are rich and belong to upper class or have their own businesses, are in good conditions, but lower middle class and labourers experience more difficulties in terms of social and financial status. Interaction with other ethnic groups, especially Pashtun, has some negative consequences.*

In general, there are fewer job opportunities in Quetta. But for poor Shia Hazara men and women it is even more difficult as they cannot commute freely to all parts of the city nor will people hire them due to security risks, leading to economic havoc for the community. One of the women, Hosna, explained that 'there are fewer opportunities for labourers; they are compelled to work in coal mines when they know it requires hard labour there'.

The irony is that the widows of martyrs, despite their dire financial condition, cannot go out for work in most cases. Some have young children to take care of while others fear moral policing or risk of harassment. Thus, their difficulties are increasing manifold with each price hike. As Zohra shared:

> *People like me have a lot of problems because we are alone, and I am the head of my family, we have lots of problems regarding education of my children, just one thing that the school does not charge us fee, as we do not have an earner in the family, and we do not have enough income, I keep on reminding Aid Foundation* [the foundation that provides financial assistance to her] *that I cannot afford the cost of living, as the cost of living is going higher and we live in a rented house. It is way too difficult, as we have to pay bills, rents, and we do not have enough income. Our expenses exceed our income, only God knows how we run our affairs.*

Another aspect of discrimination against poor Hazaras, in addition to security risk, is the harassment from officials on the pretext of checking legal documents, namely computerised national identity cards (CNICs). This is more common for the dwellers of Hazara Town as they are considered to be mostly Afghan refugees and therefore, as Aneela shared in the discussion: 'People living in Hazara Town face the issue of CNIC[3] on a daily basis and due to this same reason, they are discriminated against and exploited'.

[3] There are episodes of Afghan refugee influx to Pakistan in 1979, 1996, and 2001 due to wars and civil wars. These refugees include Afghan Hazaras as well as Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek, and others. The vast majority of Hazaras living in Pakistan (including Balochistan, Quetta) are those who migrated before Pakistan was created or soon after. But there is a political and administrative campaign (structural discrimination) trying to prove that all Hazaras are refugees. Doing so decreases the legitimacy of Hazaras and hinders their access to legal documents, and they are looked at with suspicion and asked to prove that they are pre-1979 migrants.

Young women, however, although they realise the significance of economic challenges, have given relatively lower scores to livelihood. This is not because they do not face any difficulty associated with the theme of livelihood but rather, they have come up with coping mechanisms, or, even if they have not, as some mentioned, they are so compelled that they would carry on their jobs anyway. These young women were mostly single and worked in non-profit organisations in basic to medium-level positions, cosmetics shops, and teaching in schools. An additional reason was that these young women are very well connected to people both in the community and outside of it, and are profoundly aware of other issues and advocate vocally about them. Therefore, they weigh up and relate to other things; for instance, gender discrimination, safety and security, mental health, and good education with increased chances for better livelihood.

Prices are comparatively high, and women face discrimination. Gul Zehra, a participant, said that shelter is the biggest challenge for survival: 'Of course, the prices are different, because I have no male support, I have to pay twice higher price even higher sometimes from wholesales in town'. Her case is unique as she is a Hazara Afghan refugee, the only one in 44 participants. She has to accept the difference in prices because she does not have any legal identity documents and, therefore, cannot access the main market nor can she complain in the case of grievances. And given that she happens to be a woman, it makes her case even weaker as dealers and contractors will not take her seriously. Furthermore, in comparison with non-Hazara women, they (non-Hazara poor females) might be different as at least they have the option to bargain the price (or to go to different shops) whereas poor Hazara women cannot go out due to the security and mobility issues. Hence, they are forced to buy at high prices.

Another female participant, Ghausia, shared:

> *I think check posts have restricted us so much with no benefit. We are compelled to buy vegetables, clothes, and other daily use materials at double prices in our area. We cannot go out of our area to buy things with reasonable prices. Due to these check posts and adverse situations, vendors from other communities cannot come to our area. These check posts have been the reason behind price hike in public transportation, business restriction, and financial problems. Isolation has brought us no benefit. We do not have refreshment opportunities even if we have vehicles. We are restricted to go to faraway places for refreshment.*

A woman with no education whose life is challenged after her husband was killed describes the complexities and difficulties of how the level of persecution varies according to different financial backgrounds:

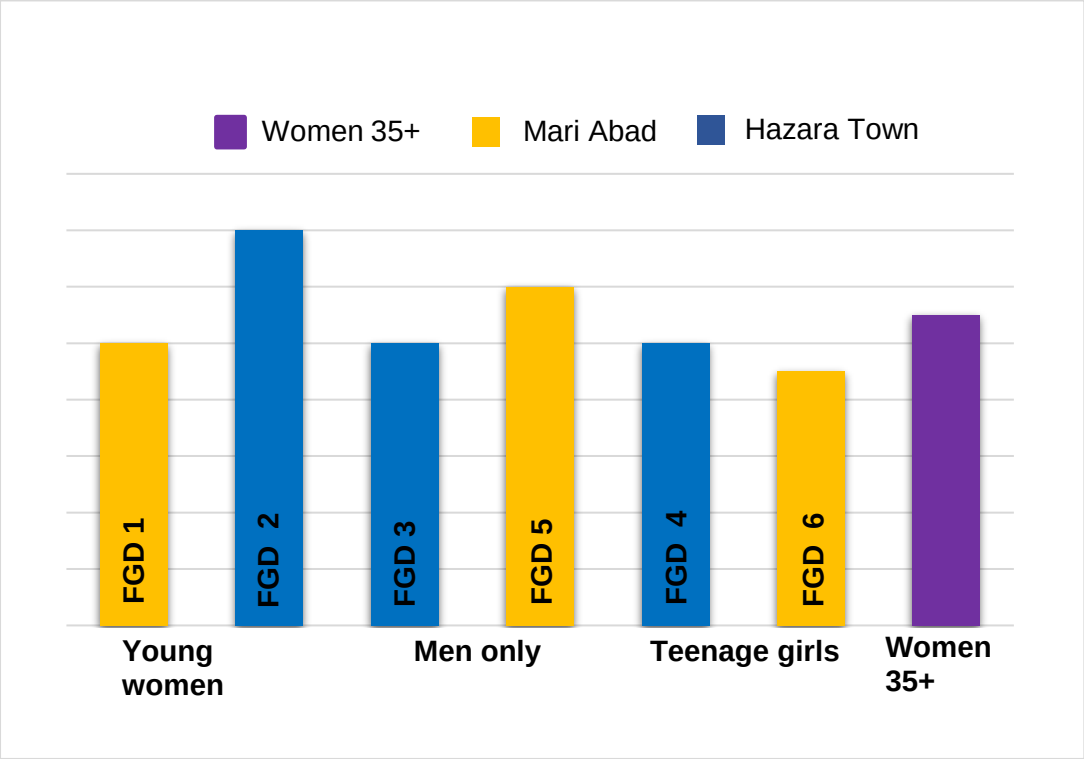
> *My husband had been killed on the way to the vegetable market on 18 May 2011 in the morning. He was the only earner of our family and a great support for me as a husband and for our children as a father. When he was killed, my children were all below 18 and schoolgoing students. At that time, I was nine months pregnant and the news of his murder shocked me to the next level that I can never express in words. You are also a female* [addressing the researcher]*, so you can know about my condition at that time with double vulnerability that I was a wife and pregnant mother. My grief, pain, and vulnerability cannot be described in words. Security situation was not favourable for the whole community but those who were directly affected, they faced more difficulties than others. Due to unfavourable situations and the burden of my children and family have turned me older than my age, my friends are still young and fresh. I had and have so many responsibilities since I am a mother and a father at the same time. After my husband, we did not have any money to feed us and fulfil other expenses. The time was so crucial and cruel after him. You can imagine that with what difficulties, I raised my children and my priority was to manage to let my children continue their education. Since I am not educated, I always wanted my children to get education and find good jobs for financial support. It was so hard to manage but I did it anyhow so that my children wouldn't blame me for their failures or misfortune. Education is a great support and hope for me, and I have never differentiated between son and daughter, I have given them equal importance and opportunities for growth and development. And I consider them both to get education and pursue their dreams and passion. People assume that I and my children have blessed and happy life with no issues or difficulties, but they never know the reality that how hard life is for us without my husband. My son is a student of Balochistan University, and I feel so much distress because he goes to university daily. All my children are in inferiority complex since they don't have their father with them. When they see other young boys and girls of*

their age, they feel they are unfortunate, and others are fortunate enough to have all facilities of life available for them.

Her husband was a driver who would bring vegetables and fruits from the vegetable wholesale market in Hazar Ganji (a market at the outskirts of Quetta) for Hazara vegetable venders. This spot and the route to it became a soft target for terrorists. The interviewee's husband was shot dead by an anti-Shia terrorist along with other Hazara vegetable vendors that day just because of their sectarian and ethnic identity. The interviewee told the researcher that even though there had been many attacks on that route and many Hazara vegetable vendors had been killed, her husband could not abandon this work as there was nothing else for him to do. Had he left that work, they would have starved.

4.3 Religious freedom

Figure 6: Aggregated ranking of all groups and women aged 35+ interviewees on religious freedom



Source: Author's own.

Religious freedom is ranked third in the aggregate ranking. A good majority of the participants opined that religious freedom and participation have declined due to fear of targeted killing, terrorism, and attacks. Though it was not ranked first in any of the FGDs, the participants in all groups and individual interviews shared several instances where they were discriminated against on the basis of being Shia Hazara. The reason for not

placing it at the crown is that Hazaras are facing existential threats and are barely surviving as a community. For them, in this situation, the right to life and the right to have access to education and livelihood are more urgent. It is a question of day-to-day survival. As important as religious identity and freedom is, it cannot provide a means of subsistence.

Participants of the study mentioned many instances of discrimination based on sectarian identity, which include refusal to share rides or space with Hazaras, stereotyping, refusal to recruit Hazaras for jobs, and constant fear of persecution.

One natural outcome of the persecution of Hazaras is that people in the community are afraid of practising or displaying their religious beliefs. While travelling, therefore, Hazaras do not feel safe to offer prayers as they can be easily identified by the (Shia) way they do the prayer even if their faces are covered:

> *When we used to go to Lahore on the train, we did not say our prayers in Sibi* [city in Balochistan province]*. Though some of our religious friends would say their prayers secretly. Our ulema had even advised us to say our prayers with tied hands* [the Sunni way] *so that we would not be identified.*

Similarly, a few participants also talked about how, despite their facial features (fair complexion, small nose and eyes, and high cheek bones), Hazara still make sure that they do not display anything that conveys their religious identity:

> *Quetta City is being restricted for expression of religious or sectarian identity. My grandfather had a shop in the market, he used to share that it is hard to express our identity in the market area. For us as a Shia being identified is so dangerous, people have lost their lives after being identified in marketplaces.*

One important point made by a teenager in FGD 6 is that women's participation in religious activities is mainly within the confines of Hazara neighbourhoods. One of the young women in FGD 2 said:

> *As compared to the past, religious rituals have become more difficult for Hazara community. In the past, Hazara women, from Hazara Town, used to visit Mari Abad for Haftakiya* [a religious ritual in which people visit seven *imambargahs* [congregation centres] before Ashura] *but now the situation is not favourable for women and mobility is restricted.*

Apart from the security lens, there are cultural barriers to women's engagement in mainstream religious rituals. Two of the teenage participants used to join the Muharram procession every year until they turned 13. Then they were reminded that they were growing up and restricted from attending the *Jaloos* (procession) and Ashura rally. The reasons are: (a) representing religious identity is mainly considered to be the responsibility of men; and (b) non-Shia people propagate a lot of inappropriate commentary about men–women interactions during mourning rituals. As a result, Shia Hazaras feel pressured to segregate men and women during rituals. Women do take part, but at mosques within the Hazara vicinity, where they can mourn and pray without any disruption, the participants shared. As one teenage participant confirmed:

> *I used to attend the Ashura Procession regularly with my friends and nobody bothered us. But gradually when I grew up, I faced resistance to continuing this ritual. By the time I was 14, I did not attend anymore.*

When girls reach adolescence, they are expected to not join all gatherings and Muharram-related main congregations with men and are strictly asked to either visit the women's section of the mosque/ *imambargah* or to pray and mourn at home. This is the case even for non-Hazara Shia. There is segregation during the prayers and religious gatherings.

4.3.1 Comparison with Hazara men and non-Hazara Shia

Within Hazaras, men are at the most vulnerable position because of their day-to-day interactions with the wider society. One young woman in FGD 1 explained the precarious position of Hazara men within the community:

> *Boys and men have more restrictions in practising religious rituals as well. If they go for practice, they can be shot dead, and attacked and targeted. If they avoid going to religious rituals, they are labelled to be communist, coward and so on and so forth. They are bound to have the responsibility of family name and honour to be maintained well.*

As mentioned earlier, men are considered to carry the legacy of religious identity and are at the forefront of any religious gathering and public display of sectarian identity. They are therefore the prime target as women worship mostly within the vicinity of a mosque and are less exposed to the public eye.

Several Hazara participants across all FGDs were of the view that non-Hazara Shia who are living in other parts of the country are relatively better off in terms of security and

religious freedom. The foremost reason is their numbers. In Karachi and Lahore, though official data are unavailable, Shias are in such significant numbers that their presence is quite visible, i.e. there are Shia-dominated neighbourhoods and hundreds of congregation centres. For example, in Karachi, there are huge localities which are dominated by Shias such as Ancholi, Jaffer-e-Tayyar, Rizvia, etc. or in Lahore, Mochi Gate. Therefore, due to their numbers, they can resist Sunni majorities unlike the Hazaras in Quetta who are confined to two areas. One woman added that, 'Shias living in other cities have fewer sectarian issues as they live in big cities and they are in majority as well'. Socioeconomic factors play a part as well, but Sunni and Shia populations are more interdependent and live in mixed communities compared to Shia Hazaras in Quetta. They also share the same ethnic background.

One of the clear differences between the condition of Hazaras and non-Hazara Shia is the political and security environment they share. Balochistan, particularly Quetta, has the worst law and order situation, which makes people of Balochistan in general and Hazaras in particular, more vulnerable. In FGD 3, the role of geopolitics was ranked at the top a number of times, and men questioned that if Hazaras lived in different cities, they would not have to face the issues which they are facing now:

> *I think it was neither a religious issue nor an ethnic issue. Friends here may differ from my views. I think it is because of our geopolitical location. If we were in a different location, we would not be targeted. Sectarian conflicts have been in other parts of the country as well, like in KPK and in Punjab but the way that only a particular group is targeted, I think it is neither because of our narrow eyes, nor because of your religious identity or ethnic group. It is not a sectarian or ethnic issue, I think it is our geopolitical location that is the reason. Our locality, like Mari Abad and Hazara Town, if they were somewhere else, like in Mall Road, Lahore, there would not be any such issue.*

Of the female participants, young women and teenagers who had exposure to other cities through either work or education, or young women who had access to information, thought that if Hazaras lived out of Balochistan, they would face fewer challenges. Women from the 35+ group did not have much idea about it.

However, one participant countered this assertion, arguing that Hazaras' facial features will kill him; it does not matter where he is. 'Our identity that we are Hazara, and we are also identified as Shia. Now, even if I write on my forehead that I am a Jew, again I would be identified as a Shia and targeted', he contested.

Shia Hazaras are, what one male participant labelled, a 'double minority', meaning a minority within a minority, two minorities at the same time: sectarian and ethic. Particularly because of their facial features, they stand out among Shias of different ethnicities.

> *They* [non-Hazara Shia] *are not in the minority like us Hazaras. In Quetta, if a Hazara gives in written that he has left Shi'ism, even then Pashtuns and others would think of him to be a Shia. I am a double minority. Sindhi Shia and Sunni cannot be differentiated.*

These male participants mentioned gender as a cross-cutting theme but not particularly when coining the term double minority.

4.3.2 Reflection

We noted that the 16–35 age groups complained that violence against the community restricted their mobility, particularly for religious activities. However, widows of martyrs and some participants thought that violence against the community has deepened their sense of identity and, therefore, they express it even more explicitly despite security threats. The main show/display of sectarian identity for Shia Hazara are the Ashura, Chehlum, and Yom-e-Ali processions that are escorted by heavy security arranged by the state. Even if they do not get the escort, Hazaras would organise these processions any way (Sultan 2020). The deepening of sectarian identity and the consequent pressure to ensure women adhere to the religio-political context of the identity have adverse impacts on women.

Interestingly, religious freedom is ranked third by the men in FGD 3 compared to young women (fifth) and teenagers (fourth). It is evident that families who have lost their dear ones to violence and terrorism have a deeper sense of religious/sectarian identity and want to continue to express it at any cost. One of the women aged 35+ interviewees said:

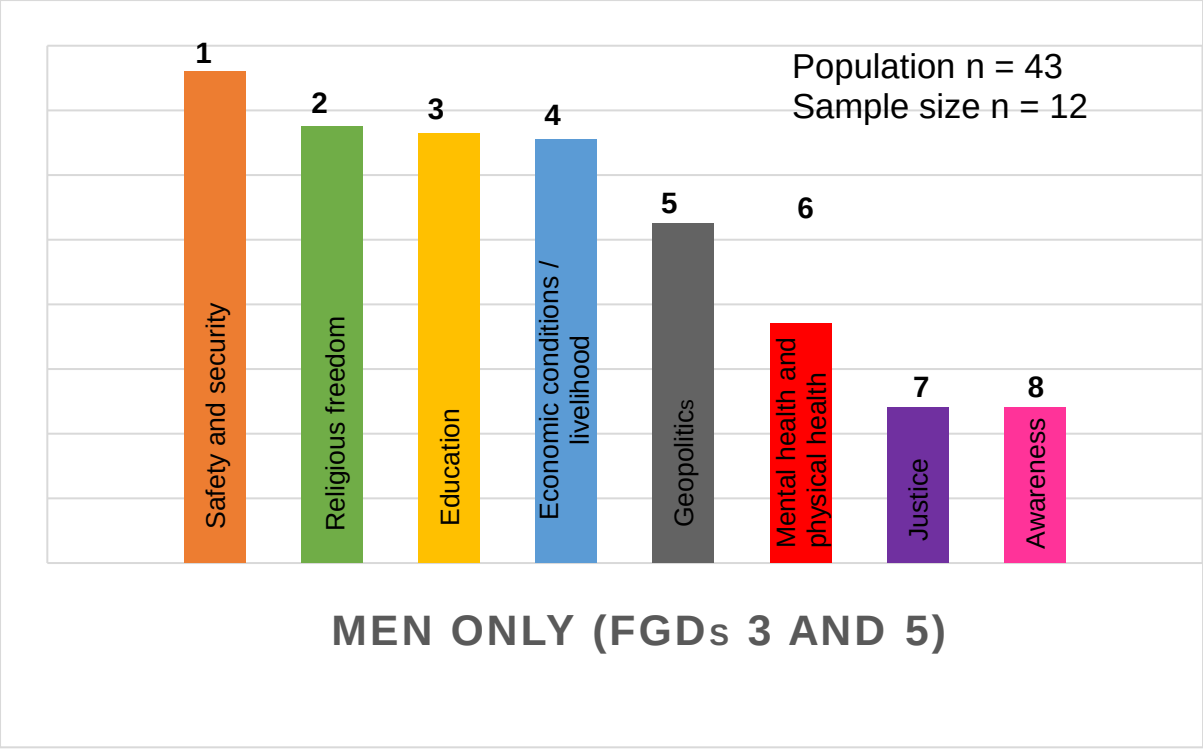
> *As per my observation the attendance has increased as we witness during the lockdown Covid-19 pandemic, government had banned gathering/procession be religious or otherwise yet again Hazara community organised and attended the procession for Imam Ali* [ibn abi Talib] *martyrdom in large numbers. And nothing happened to these attendees of procession* [no coronavirus contraction, she believes]. *This enthusiasm is out of great respect and love for Imam Husayn* [Husayn ibn Ali abi Talib].

Another way of looking at this is that religious attendance within the vicinity of the Hazara locality has increased while it declined outside the neighbourhoods owing to the risk of attack by sectarian militants. A participant from Hazara Town, an activist, confirms that religious gatherings such as Friday Prayers and other congregations within Hazara Town and Mari Abad have increased attendance:

> *The Friday Prayers in Hazara Town has the largest attendance as I recall from the past. One can also see how people participate in Muharram and other religious gatherings in large numbers. They think that their identity is being attacked, therefore, they express it even more robustly now.*

4.4 Safety and security

Figure 7: Aggregated ranking of men's FGD 3 and FGD 5



Source: Author's own.

The men ranked safety and security at the top. All women and these men emphasised the harsh reality of the risks of being attacked. Physical security was frequently mentioned throughout the research. It has affected mobility, access to education, and livelihood opportunities. There was not a lot of discussion and sharing on sexual violence explicitly from either the male or female participants. The reason is people are not comfortable talking about it. Since 2010–11, Hazaras have been contained mainly in

two neighbourhoods and their everyday movement is restricted, subject to over-policing through check posts. For Hazaras, leaving these two areas and going to different parts of the city can be a matter of life and death. Though the men's group has ranked it as first, one of the women provides an apt introduction to the situation which summarises the lived experience of the community:

> *People, who go out of the community for education or job purposes on a daily basis, face the hardest feeling of fear and insecurity, their families wait for their safe return with fear of getting killed by the way. Quetta to Karachi or Islamabad and Quetta to Iran 2D car services* [rented cars] *and buses have been targeted. Nobody knows how a son is raised for 20 to 25 years: he's the last hope of life for his mother. All these incidents with their long-lasting impact have traumatised Hazara community and they suffer from psychological problems.*

Studies have well documented the experiences (trauma and fear) of the Hazara community and how the insecurity heightened the sense of fear among the community (Saeed 2018; NCHR 2018). One particularly important point that we observed in the men's FGDs is the stark effect of violence on the community and how non-Hazaras view Hazaras as a potential threat for their security. There were several anecdotes and personal experiences in which Hazaras were either directly told not to come, i.e. to work or to study, or discouraged to show their presence in certain public places. For example, one male participant shared:

> *During the target killing how the students go to the universities, how our seniors used to go to their universities, we know it very well. There were days when the buses refused to take us. They declined to take Hazara passengers, as there were risks of attacks on them.*

Several participants also shared that when the violence against the community was at its peak during 2007–15, some non-Hazaras in Quetta started to assume that since Hazaras were facing violence, they either will not show up or should not be invited to work-related meetings. One male participant in FGD 5 shared a story of someone named Najeeb who was an active member of the Private Schools Association:

> *He leads the meetings, but recently he was not called for a meeting because it was being held in Pashtunabad* [Pashtun neighbourhood] *and Najeeb was disappointed to know that he was not summoned for the meeting. Other participants told him that since the meeting was in a Pashtun area so they assumed*

> *that Najeeb would not attend. This is yet another example of how Hazaras get sidelined in leadership positions in the pretext of a security threat. Same happens in NGOs, if they know you are a Hazara, one is not hired, as they cite security threats, Hazara lady health workers lost their jobs because of the same reasons. Neither Hazaras dare to apply for any job, nor are employers willing to hire them.*

One young woman in FGD 2 also corroborated this:

> *Since the situation is adverse, I am not invited to meetings, gatherings, or events of chamber as I am a member of chamber as well. They directly exclaimed that they feared from inviting us, they explained that if I were invited to their events, that would create problems for them to be attacked or targeted.*

Discrimination in obtaining legal documents is a big agony. The authorities together with non-Hazara residents are pushing hard to prove that all Hazaras residing in Quetta are refugees.

There were Afghan refugee influxes into Pakistan in 1979, 1996, and 2001 due to wars and civil wars. These refugees include Afghan Hazaras as well Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek, and others. The vast majority of Hazaras living in Pakistan (including Balochistan, Quetta) are those who migrated even before the creation of Pakistan or soon after. But there is a political and administrative campaign (structural discrimination) trying to prove that all Hazaras are refugees. Doing so decreases the legitimacy of Hazaras and hinders their access to legal documents, as they are looked at with suspicion and asked to prove that they are pre-1979 migrants.

In this connection, verification of refugees has been used a tool for discrimination against Hazaras. It is extremely difficult to get CNICs for adolescents aged 18 years. Those who have already obtained an CNIC but want to renew it after its expiry also go through unnecessary delays and suspicion. The authorities know that if Hazaras do not possess CNICs they can be harassed or compelled to pay bribes for no reason. It also has political impacts: fewer CNICs issued means less votes are cast in the local general election and this consequently affects the chances of Hazara candidates winning.

When asked whether security check posts have improved the sense of security, with the exception of a few participants, most thought otherwise. A teenage participant, widow of a *shaheed* 'martyr' (a person who is killed for his/her religious or other beliefs without any guilt/sin/crime), believed the security apparatus played a role in violent incidents: 'I believe that they themselves are involved in such incidents, these many incidents

couldn't occur without security apparatus' help and support'. Since all the Shia Hazara – male and female – who have been killed did not commit any crime and were not guilty, the only reasons for being targeted were their sectarian and ethnic identities. Therefore, they are referred to as *shaheed* (martyrs).

4.4.1 Comparison between Hazara men and non-Hazara Shia men and women

The vast majority of participants believed that Shia Hazaras were less safe and had more security challenges in comparison with non-Hazara Shia for several reasons. However, two main reasons were frequently mentioned by the participants. First, most importantly, their Mongolian facial features make them easily identifiable among other people (Changezi and Biseth 2011: 80). Second is the law and order situation, which has been worsening for decades. Therefore, life for Shia Hazaras in Balochistan is full of risks. One teenage girl made the point that:

> *Our challenges are greater than other Shia communities as we face more hate speeches because we are easily recognised/distinguishable due to our facial features. Shia communities living in Karachi or Lahore face no difficulty in mobility. They can easily move around their city with safety, but our mobility is restricted as a Shia Hazara community. They have more and better opportunities as well.*

A young woman in FGD 1 presented a similar argument:

> *I think if we were not Hazaras and did not have specific facial features, our identification as a Shia would not be easy. Shias belonging to other ethnicity are safer in terms of identification. Being Hazara has brought more harm than being Shia. Other ethnic Shia or Sunni have almost similar complexion and features, so they aren't easily identified as Shia until they say it by themselves.*

When vulnerabilities were compared between Hazara men and Hazara women, there seemed to be a consensus among all participants that Hazara men are more vulnerable for reasons such as more exposure, mobility, and interaction. This stems from cultural, religious, political and financial responsibilities that Hazara men are assumed to fulfil. -This acknowledgement came particularly from the 16–35 and 35+ age groups as participants in these two groups have lost their sons, brothers, or fathers. One woman in FGD 2 explained:

> *When we ladies go out to the market area, we do not fear ourselves much but our brothers. When my brothers go out to market, we fear and suffer from anxiety till the time they come back home safely. Hazara sisters and mothers suffer from mental distress while the male members are out of home they pray for their safe return. This mental distress keeps them suffering from mental and psychological disorders. Hazara men have less job opportunities as compared to Hazara women due to mobility issues.*

A woman in FGD 1 acknowledged that Hazara men face more security issues than Hazara women:

> *In my view, Shia Hazara boys/males have more problems than girls/females; they face more issues, more discrimination and danger. They have difficulties both at home and in community. They have greater responsibilities and therefore, greater expectations are set against their responsibilities. They have to find a job for themselves to support their family and finding a job here is also a matter of risk and threat to life.*

One young woman shared that sometimes, a man or boy has to witness unnecessary questions from the family when they go out:

> *Due to adverse security situations Hazara women themselves have restricted mobility of male members, while leaving home male members have to answer so many irrelevant questions. I have two brothers here and the third one is out of Pakistan, whenever they go out to the market area, I insist to take me with them since I think, being with ladies is far more secure and they wouldn't face any difficulty or any incident wouldn't happen to them. They are fed up with our restriction and weird behaviour, but we are compelled to behave weird due to the prevailing security situation.* (FGD 2)

One woman compared the situation of Hazaras with the rest of Pakistani (patriarchal) society where men view women as an object of honour, and therefore 'protect' them from other people. The woman's response shows that the community has lost so many young men and now they are overprotective of their male members:

> *In this unfavourable security situation, if we compare ourselves with other communities, we will realise that they have issues and*

> *difficulties in protecting their females whereas we fear our males' protection. I have the only brother here in Quetta, so my mother calls on his number several times when he is out of home. He cries out that he is not let free even in the premises of Hazara Town.* (FGD 2)

The participants' responses overwhelmingly establish that Hazara men are more vulnerable than Hazara women. However, one male Hazara in FGD 5 countered this assertion and argued:

> *In terms of death toll, there may not be big figures from Hazara females getting killed, the percentage for Hazara male killed is higher. We will not only talk of physical harm, but also economic one. Emotional toll for a female is higher than that for a male. Talking of mobility, when it is difficult for Hazara males to move around, it is even more difficult for Hazara females. As the Hazara lady health workers had to restrict their movements, they would even go for duties outside Quetta district.*

Non-Hazara Shia have certain advantages that somehow lessen their vulnerabilities and make them more resilient. Mixed settlements, no distinguishable facial features that make them identifiable from others and being native and having more resources are some factors that are worthy of mention. Basically, being woven in the economic and social fabric of society together with the Sunni makes the non-Hazara Shia less vulnerable. Though sectarian identity is also an important marker for non-Hazara Shia, their shared ethnic identity with that of the Sunni majority is a defining factor of integration. Therefore, non-Hazara Shia inter-sect marriages are comparatively common.

Security was ranked top in the men's FGDs as they have day-to-day interactions and more direct engagement with non-Hazara people and towns. But our interviews with women aged 35+ also apprise that this segment of women have a somewhat similar experience to Hazara men: as women-headed families, these widows are responsible for all the needs of their dependents. For example, Ghausia, a widowed mother of two children whose husband was shot dead on his auto rickshaw in Karachi, shared that:

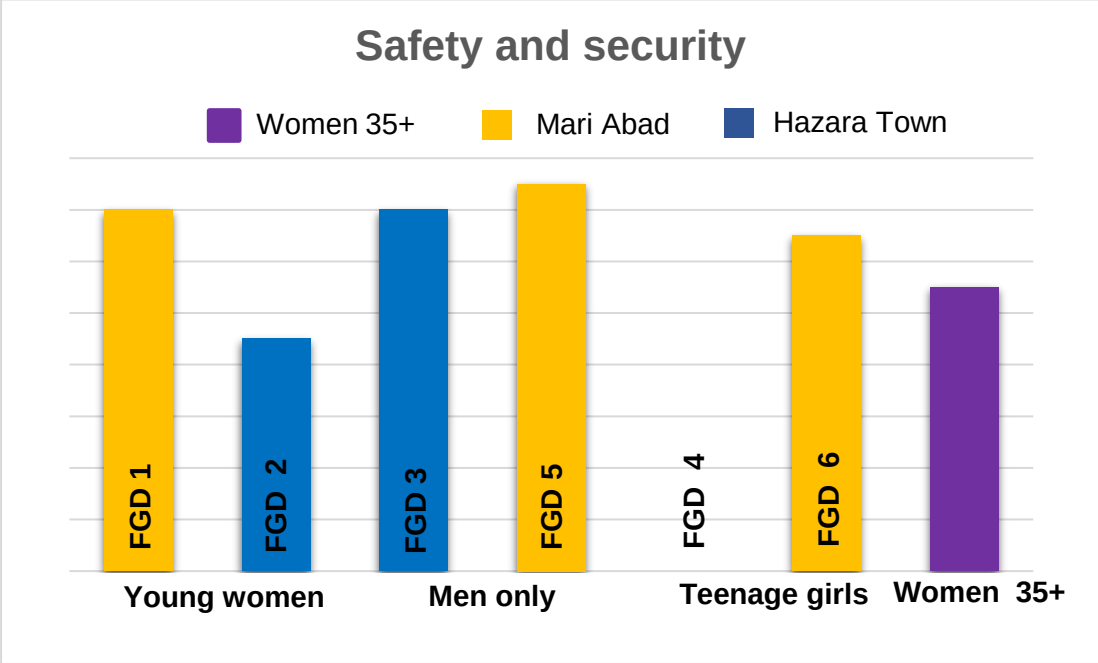
> *The security situation is adverse, so I fear mobility. If I have to go to the market area or Hazara Town, I don't take my children along with me. To me Benazir Flyover* [a flyover connecting two Hazara neighbourhoods in Quetta] *seems like a border between this world and the other. People don't feel safe while crossing the flyover, compulsions are real, so I prefer to go without children.*

A similar experience was shared by Gul Jahan, a mother of five children who lost her husband in a target killing:

> *I avoid going to marketplaces when the situation is not good or favourable. I do not even go to Hazara Town. Mobility is fully restricted, and I face difficulties to make my children feel safe and my children too ask me not to go out as a matter of fear. They fear not to lose me, and I also don't want to leave them without a mother when they already don't have a father. When I get ill, my children cannot afford, and they weep so much.*

4.4.2 Reflection

Figure 8: Aggregated responses on participants on safety and security



Source: Author's own.

Safety and security remain a major challenge for Hazaras in Quetta. As depicted in Figure 8, men are subject to more physical threats and thus have ranked it at one, while for the other participants it is still a huge hurdle to overcome in aspiring or accomplishing anything in life. It is interesting to note the flat graph representing teenage girls of Hazara Town. Not ranking safety and security as a theme does not mean that they do not consider it a major problem; rather, these teenagers discussed and revealed it to be a cross-cutting theme. Therefore, they did not identify it as a separate challenge but an overarching one. For instance, safety and security is a major issue when deciding which educational institute to attend, shopping in the main malls within the vicinity or visiting relatives who live in the other Hazara neighbourhood.

For the women, lack of safety and security hugely hallmark their lives. Having lost their dear ones to violence, their lives have totally altered and restricted their mobility and socialisation so that their children remain safe. They hardly visit the bazar area and try to avoid going to Hazara localities whenever possible because of the security situation.

It is interesting to note that this safety and security dilemma shapes the heightened notion of protecting and policing women and silently reinforces any patriarchal tendencies that are already in place. Families that are overprotective of their female members have increased social and moral policing. 'Our brothers, who are younger than us, teach us lessons of honour and respect', shared a young woman who is a football coach. The male family members remind women of the grave security situation and thus there is no need to go out or work.

In late May 2020, the lynching of a Pashtun teenager, Bilal Noorzai, in Hazara Town by a Hazara mob (Sultan, Changezi and Habib 2020) came as surprise to both Hazaras and non-Hazaras in Quetta. 'I stayed home for many days after the incident as I was scared', said a woman named Saba.

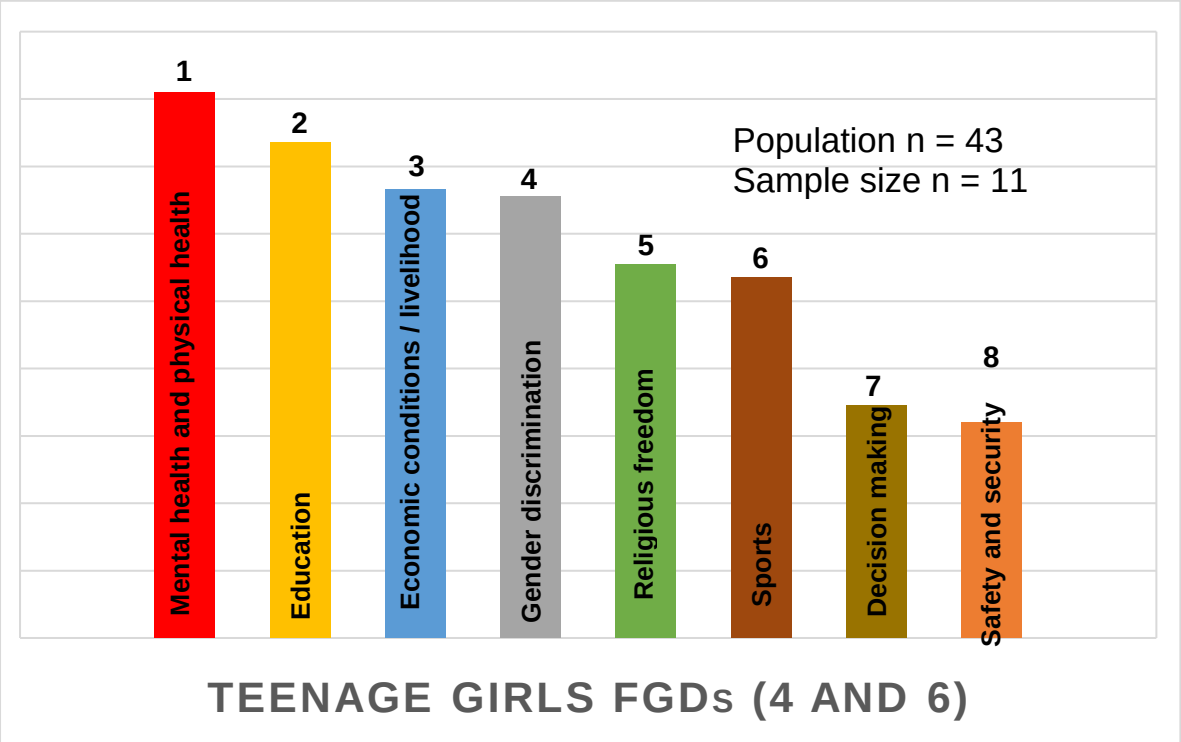
Interestingly, one of the reasons identified by the young women for being harassed by non-Hazara men is their fairer complexion. While non-Hazara communities in Balochistan have either a darker complexion or a range of skin colors, Hazaras stand out as a fair complexion community with very little variation. Light skin is considered a beauty standard in South Asia, including Pakistan. Women with lighter skin are seen as more beautiful and can be subject to more staring and harassment, as in the case of Hazara women. Additionally, Hazara girls and women who do not study or work outside the community have no or minimal interaction with other communities and perceive non-Hazara men's behaviour as unpredictable. They are basically afraid of coming across these men in the town or Bazar areas. This also has to do with out-group aversion or dislike, particularly in the context of targeted killing of Hazaras. Consequently, these Hazara young women or teenagers with little exposure feel less safe when around non-Hazara men.

The hate talk against Shia Hazara includes derogatory terms using animal names (culturally it is derogatory to call someone a dog or pig) and abusive words. Whenever there is mention of a woman, it has abusive sexual connotations. There is a huge trend of *takfir*, a practice of calling another sect heretic, in which Sunni extremist groups raise slogans against Shias and called them Kafir (infidel). Hazaras are also referred to as Kafir, which was recently visible in the anti-Hazara protest led by Pashtuns against the lynching of Noor, where they were also called 'the most cursed creature'.[4]

[4] See videos (in Urdu) at: https://bit.ly/2Na4wuE

4.5 Mental and physical health

Figure 9: Aggregated responses of all groups, including women aged 35+ interviewees, on mental and physical health



Source: Author's own.

The teenage girls' top ranking is mental and physical health, while it stands at fifth for the entire population of the study. It is not a surprise as in both FGDs, teenage girls shared about the pressures and mental agony they go through in all aspects of life. The ranking is similar for the young women participants, with slightly lower scores, while it declines for women in the 35+ group – these participants are in most cases single mothers and their own physical being and mental health challenges are overlooked. In comparison to the teenagers and young women, there is less recognition of mental health issues in the older generation of women within the Hazara community. It highlights the dire situation of these women-headed families whose prime challenge is to feed their children and keep them safe. Their own health and wellbeing are either ignored or compromised for they have to show themselves to be strong.

It must be noted that the participating teenage girls are of the generation born into the violence and raised in isolation and ghettos. They have had much less exposure to the world outside the Hazara community. They were born in a community that has been forced to constantly live in fear of violence against them for almost two decades. Though living in a ghettoised environment has become a practice, the challenges that this

ghettoisation brings remain unaddressed. One of the unspoken challenges is the trauma that every Hazara male and female – including children – face on a daily basis when any member of the family goes out of the Hazara areas even for routine chores. This has serious psychological consequences for the community, particularly the younger generation.

One young woman in FGD 2 shared the trauma that she and the female members of her family routinely experience and how they suffer from anxiety and fear when the male family members are out, even if they have only gone to a local market:

> *My brothers are done with studies and stay at home, doing nothing. When we ladies go out to the market area, we don't fear ourselves much but our brothers. When my brothers go out to the marketplace, we fear and suffer from anxiety till the time they come back home safely. Hazara sisters and mothers suffer from mental distress while the male members are out of home they pray for their safe return. This mental distress keeps them suffering from mental and psychological disorders. Hazara men have less job opportunities as compared to Hazara women due to mobility issues. If a family has any financial support from out of the country or within the country, or any lady of the family goes out for work, it is again good for them, but if the two of these supports aren't available, the family has to suffer a lot. Males cannot go out for jobs or they don't find any with ease.*

Also in FGD 2, Mehroma pointed out the same phenomenon: 'Females have developed mental disorders due to the pressure they have of their males' safety and security'. Women not only have to take care of themselves but also their families, particularly the adolescent and adult males as Hazara males are the prime target of physical harm in the wake of terrorism. Women constantly check up on them when they are out of the home for work or other reasons, and remain anxious and worried. A participant in FGD 1 spoke about the perplexities of the city: it was once known as the 'fruit garden of Pakistan' and a beautiful tourist spot but has become a place of trauma for its residents. She continued, 'In comparison to other cities, Quetta City has more severe effects of mental stress and trauma. Other cities have different atmospheres, even doctors recommend people to visit other cities to get refreshed'.

Another important and sensitive issue was highlighted in FGD 2 when a woman shared how she was living a comparatively carefree life as she never had to face any financial difficulties, being from a financially stable family, but when she was exposed to the bombing in 2012 it had a huge impact on her mental health. The impact of the violence

and bombings on those who are not physically harmed is much less talked about and no practical measures had been taken to address this.

> *I am a lucky child as I am the youngest at home and my family is financially stable so I did not face any difficulty except 2012 bomb blast on SBK point, it left a great impact on my mental and psychological health. We were distant about a ten yards from the point which was targeted, we fell on the ground with no serious injuries, when I reached home that day my father who lives abroad made a phone call and asked me if I got any serious injury, he also encouraged me not to leave my studies and university from the next day.* (FGD 2)

A horrific and alarming trend, particularly among youth, is the increasing number of suicides:

> *Despite all the facilities provided to young boys and girls, we hear about suicide attempts, one of our relatives' daughters hanged herself with the fan, hardly 14 years old. Her mother and sister-in-law were not home, when they came back home and saw the girl hanging, they fell off the ground unconscious. She was the only daughter of her mother therefore, she had access to all facilities of life. Unfavourable security situations, psychological and mental issues lead to this way.* (FGD 2)

Kazimiya (FGD 4), who has studied psychology, explained that although the city faces so many issues and the people are badly affected by traumatic experiences, there is no scope for psychological studies and no jobs are available. One of the main issues is the stereotyping of mental health and the associated shame and taboos. Privacy and trust are another major challenge: patients lack trust in the doctors as in a tight-knit society there is no surety that what is shared with the doctors will remain confidential. Kazimiya further elaborates:

> *Everyone is affected due to trauma and terrorism. There was this mentally ill educated woman. When I asked her why she does not visit a psychologist. She said would you give 100 per cent surety that what I share, it would be kept as a secret? There is no confidentiality and privacy concept. No trust. Two girls I know that have mental conditions and their only support is their elder sister but even then, their family does not allow them to visit a proper psychologist. There was another girl who visited a psychologist*

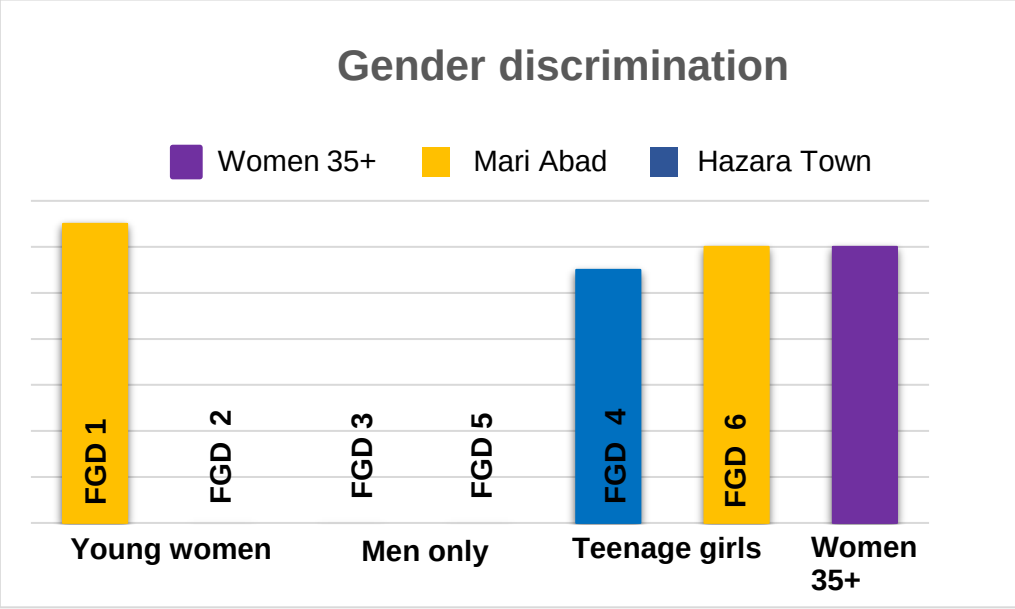
here. The psychologist asked her if she wanted to discuss in the presence of her mother. She told me who she would be able to discuss her problems within presence of her mother. So, decided to share a problem which her mother knows and nothing else. She said if I said that I prefer to share alone, my mother would think that my daughter does not trust me. If I say ok. How can I discuss my problem in the presence of my mother?

Kazimiya highlights the important issue of heavy drugs being prescribed to children. She said that doctors prescribe lots of drugs to children, including an 11-year-old who was given a heavy dose of antidepressants. 'How can an 11-year-old use that heavy drug? There is no research-based solution', she regretted.

Less talked about is the lack of any playgrounds and entertainment facilities for the children. Zehra said, 'They are working all day with me, they have no access to parks or joy lands; however, my son, he is sometimes managing to play football in an open free ground. Girls have no entertainment but to be with me either working in a bakery or doing household chores.'

4.6 Internal misogyny/gender discrimination

Figure 10: Aggregated ranking of all groups and women aged 35+ interviewees on gender discrimination



Source: Author's own.

Another factor contributing to the traumatic experiences of Hazara women, we have noted, is the prejudice against women within the community that causes further suppression, and this affects the advancement of young women. In the FGDs, both males and females discussed how it has affected their lives. One young woman in FGD 1 shared:

> *We are throughout face mental distress due to the pathetic social norm that females in our societies are considered to be responsible for family name and honour; therefore, they are more restricted than males to follow their dreams and do what they are interested in to do in order not to defame family.*

Kazimiya (FGD 4), summed up the discriminatory attitude of society against women: 'Parents would feel proud that I have a martyred son, but I have not seen a single parent that is proud of her martyred daughter'.

It has been observed and discussed during our research that women face discrimination in multiple forms. As family honour is associated with the female members, there have been a few incidents where females have been harassed and shamed by photographs of them being posted on social media. This has instilled fear in every female to the extent that women – particularly young girls – avoid partaking in social events and gatherings. One young woman in FGD 1 shared:

> *These things have severely affected us; we have turned so ill of such matters. Leaking of pictures had made life hard. I do not even make snaps with cousins in family gatherings as a mental pressure restricts me that anyone anytime can misuse my snaps with editing or else. I have friends who are close, living abroad, whenever they ask to share photos with them, I directly say no to them because the cost of respect and honour is much more than we can pay. They say I don't trust them, but I say it's not about trust, I don't feel comfortable therefore, I avoid it. Many girls and women restricted their attendance from events and other activities. Even females used to fear from attending wedding ceremonies and other events to secure themselves, that made them suffer from mental distress and tension. This is a huge burden no doubt. Mental distress and pressure create so many problems for females as a young woman said that they cannot attend events for the fear of getting pictures leaked or trusting our friends these days. And as she shared her comfort level for sharing pictures with friends that one cannot really trust.*

Since the status of women in Balochistan is bleak, if development indicators of Hazara women are compared with those of the rest of the province, it shows a very promising picture. But one needs to understand that it is not because the indicators are extremely good (except for education) for Hazara women but because the provincial standards fall so low. -The literacy rate for Hazara women is high and they are considered progressive compared to women from other non-Hazara ethnic groups within Quetta. There are many examples of how the patriarchal and discriminatory culture within the Hazara community has stopped women from participating in sports and business. One young woman in FGD 2 said:

> *No doubt as a female, being part of a football team itself is not acceptable for males. I was part of the football team and played from 2005 to 2011. During that time, we* [she and her sister] *and my cousin faced so many problems, people used to talk rubbish about us even my cousin's proposal was rejected because of the same issue. People claimed that we were dangerous girls.*

Another female participant argued that the issues of honour and ego arise for males when they see their women progressing:

> *Responsibilities of family are at one hand and on the other hand our brothers, who are younger than us, teach us lessons of honour and respect, look at us with an unpleasant gaze. They cannot afford it when their friends and other people talk about their sisters playing football or running restaurants. It hurts their ego when they are accused of wrongdoings due to their sisters.*

4.6.1 Comparison between Hazara men and women

There are many examples where women are discriminated against based on gender, which has affected their education and ability to partake in sports social events; hence, it has added to the oppression they face distinct to that of Hazara males. Although both Hazara men and women face violence and oppression, the women also face oppression from the male members of the family and the patriarchal society. One teenage girl in FGD 4 asserted:

> *Hazaras claim that they do not discriminate between boys and girls, but they do. I have two brothers who do not study, they get low marks in their studies, still my father says if you want to study, I will send both of you even outside Pakistan. But his daughters*

are not allowed even though they study hard. A boy who is still very young, he is given mobile, but his daughter who is even in college does not have mobile. Mobiles of girls are checked but no one cares about boys.

Like any other patriarchal society, men impose their decisions on women. Some Hazara women are forced to give up their ambition, particularly athletes, as one participant in FGD 2 explained:

No doubt, there is many girls in sports but many of them do not have permission from home to play and represent any club on a national level. Because of their huge interest and enthusiasm, they come for practice, but their families do not allow them to be part of any league or championship.

There was a clear sense of agitation and protest among teenage girls over the double standards they witness within their own community. One teenage girl in FGD 4 protested:

In our community everyone has an opinion and wants to impose it. Like if a girl wants to do singing. They have got problems with that too. They harass and say aren't you Shia? They watch Katrina Kaif [Bollywood actress] *but harass Zahra Elham* [woman Hazara singer]. *I believe we are educated but ignorant.*

Another teenager pointed out how women are blackmailed in the name of honour and piety:

People poke their nose in other people's social media accounts so that your hair can be seen in photos. They say where is your honour that your wife is seen in social media with her hair visible. Moral policing is so rampant in our society. If we marry a non-Hazara they say that our generation will go to hell.

The moral policing regime on social media applies to non-Hazara women as well. But it is important to understand that this issue is highlighted by Hazara men more because they need to protect their honour at any cost.

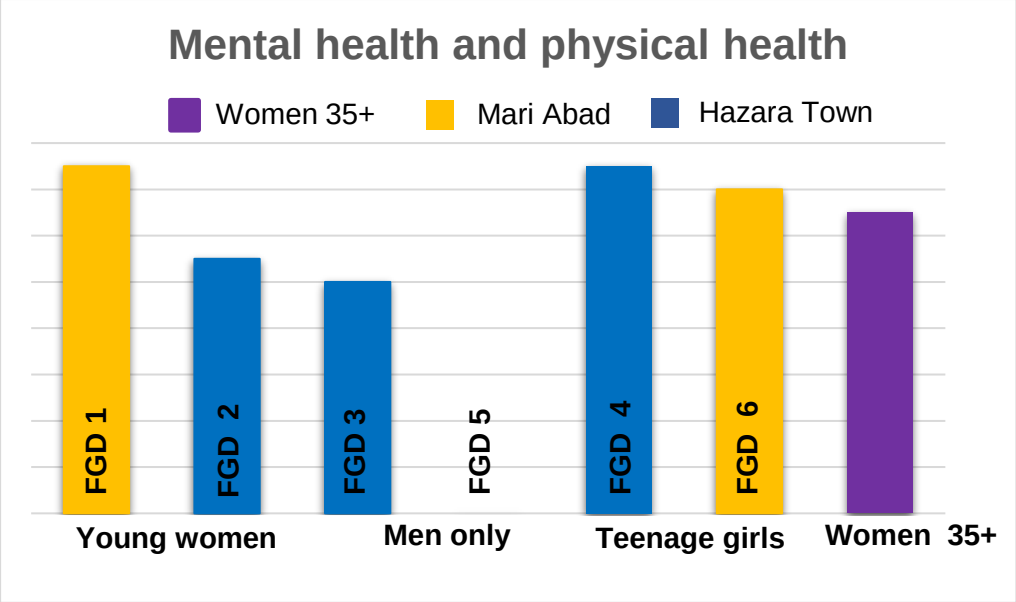
The pressure for girls to get married by a certain age also limits their occupational aspirations. Besides, it is still considered a taboo to financially depend on a female. This is evident from the trend of early marriage owing to the adverse security situation and cultural norms. In essence, it has made an emotional and social environment where getting married is the prime goal for girls and women. The ground researcher observed that women and girls were weary of this and wanted to get an education and be

independent. In effect, when girls could not carry on their higher education studies due to the violence against Hazaras, and their parents could not afford to arrange education in other cities of Pakistan, the only viable option left for girls is marriage.

Sports are still seen as the man's domain. Despite Hazara women sports persons being celebrated and owned by the community, people are reluctant to allow their daughters to pursue a career in sports or even as a leisure activity. A young woman who is the manager of the female football team in Hazara Town opined that people regarded her as a dangerous girl only because she was active and played sports: 'My sister was selected for the national club to play and represent it but owing to social pressures she preferred to get married instead'.

4.6.2 Reflection

Figure 11: Aggregated responses of all groups including women aged 35+ interviewees on mental and physical health



Source: Author's own.

In the oppressive environment where there are no or fewer job opportunities for both males and females, men are still expected to support their families while women face extra moral policing. This has added to the mental stress leading to the suicidal trend in young boys and girls.

Women and girls suffer more than men and boys at the hands of patriarchal and cultural norms. Women have fewer opportunities and their mobility and freedom are more restricted. They are dependent on male members for their decisions and face discrimination. This can result in developing mental health issues. But men and boys, as

was discussed in FGDs, have more financial pressure on them: they have fewer job opportunities but more financial responsibilities. Due to cultural norms, females are not expected to contribute financially to the family and men mostly limit their freedom; but this leads to the men's own suffering. Unknowingly, men also suffer due to the patriarchal norms, but they do not realise it.

It is unfortunate that as a community under siege, there is little realisation of how critical the issue of mental health is. The exceptions are teenagers and young women, who are beyond the notion of mental health issues being taboo; and a lot of younger males recognise it as an issue, but they do not give it due weight. The older women participants, on the other hand, place it last on the list because there is already too much for them to cope with and resolve.

There is a slow collective realisation of the issue. Many attributed the lynching of Bilal Noorzai to the long unreconciled mental and psychological trauma that the community is going through. Another fissure is the teenage suicide trend that speaks loudly of serious unaddressed mental challenges.

5 Conclusion

During the research we heard horrific stories of persecution and marginalisation of the Hazara community. Amidst the media coverage of violence against Hazaras, the marginalisation of Shia Hazara women became invisible in the news and academic scholarships covering the community. A closer examination reveals that the Shia Hazara women have experienced parallel suffering, either as a result of losing the family breadwinner, or through restrictions on mobility due to societal or patriarchal norms that exacerbate their financial condition and social isolation. This research closely examined the intersection of gender, class, and religious affiliation in the marginalisation of Hazara women and attempted to answer the underlying questions posed at the beginning.

Based on the responses of the participants in the FGDs and interviews, it is evident that there is a serious and distinctive impact on Hazara women regarding the issue of Shia persecution. The Shia Hazara women are affected in different ways. For example, in education, young women and girls were either discouraged or prevented from pursuing further studies by their family due to concerns about security or, if they somehow convinced them that they should continue, they endure acute commuting challenges. In addition, they also face harassment and discrimination based on their ethnic and sectarian identities.

The day-to-day mobility of the Shia Hazara women is restricted. Generally, Hazaras are confined to two areas of Quetta. However, with the addition of the gender element, Hazara women are further confined, as raised by a male participant in FGD 5 and corroborated by Ghausia, who avoids crossing the Benazir Flyover to avoid any mishap. Some female participants confirmed that movement between the Hazara Town and Mari Abad neighbourhoods is also restricted. Based on the responses, our research validates that the securitisation and over-policing of the community creates more challenges for Hazara women than for men.

There seems to be a consensus among all participants that non-Hazara Shia are in a better position to get education, practice freedom of religion, and to move around the neighbourhoods in the city. Our participants gave two main reasons:

- The Mongolian facial features of Hazaras make them vulnerable both within and outside of Quetta. During one FGD, one man aptly explained the importance of facial features in the Hazara persecution by saying that 'even if I write on my forehead that I am a Jew, I would be identified as a Shia and targeted'.
- The geopolitical position as Quetta is a particular hotspot of sectarian and regional proxies. This was ranked high by the men's FGDs. Though Karachi is also among the cities where Shias have been the target of militants, the Shias in that city still enjoy a level of freedom in aspects such as mobility and job opportunities, and – most importantly – they are not as easily identifiable as the Hazaras.

We also noticed a subtle variation within the Shia Hazara women of low-income backgrounds and women-headed families. It was brought up many times by the interviewees, and supported by the participants of the FGDs, that the experiences and suffering of poor women are double those of Hazara women who do not struggle financially or have male members to support them. One of the key issues they referred to is paying the house rent, as their only source of income is the aid money they receive monthly, which is not enough to meet their basic needs, including their children's school fees, rent, and food. Price hikes remain a challenge for them as due to the security check posts and with no male support, they are forced to pay double the price when they shop, making their financial problems even worse.

In addition, the residents of Hazara Town – including women – are harassed by security officials on the pretext of checking CNICs more often than the inhabitants of Mari Abad. This is because Hazara Town is relatively newly developed and is home to some Afghan Hazara refugees.

One of the male participants identified Hazaras as a 'double minority' (i.e. sectarian and ethic) within Shias. We therefore conclude that Shia Hazara women are a 'multi-layered

minority' within Shias who are subject to further marginalisation due to their gender, class, and religious-ethnic affiliation. In comparison to Hazara men, these three signifiers or identities increase the challenges faced by Hazara women in areas such as education, mobility, gender-based discrimination, mental health, and economic/livelihood issues.

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Annexe 1 – Focus Group Discussion and Age Brackets

FGDs	Age group
FGD 1	16–35 women
FGD 2	16–35 women
FGD 3	Men (mixed age group)
FGD 4	Teenage girls
FGD 5	Men (mixed age group)
FGD 6	Teenage girls

Annexe 2 – FGDs and Interview Ranking Themes

There were four broad guiding themes around which researchers started conversations: Education and Health, Economic Conditions/Livelihood, Religious Freedom, and Safety and Security. The participants would then move to other main themes or sub-themes as per their experiences and knowledge. On average, each FGD came up with five to seven themes that they later ranked. The researcher used her expertise and knowledge of the context to combine similar themes for which participants used slightly different wording. The 15 overall themes are:

- **Safety and Security**: Both physical and psychological;
- **Gender Discrimination**: As a cross-cutting theme;
- **Education**: Opportunities, challenges and impact;
- **Mental and Physical Health**: Violence-induced trauma and related health challenges;
- **Economic Conditions/Livelihood**: Jobs, poverty, and how they have been affected by terrorism;
- **Religious Freedom**: To practice and express freely their sectarian identity;
- **Geopolitics**: Influence of regional politics on Hazaras;
- **Sports**: Indoor and outdoor sports;
- **Recreation**: Leisure facilities such as parks, family picnic points, etc.;
- **Decision Making**: Individual capacity and at family level; also collectively at communal level;
- **Political Participation**: Participation of women in political activities such as elections and rallies, etc.;
- **Child Marriage**: Marriage of a person below 18 years old;
- **Justice**: Demand to bring terrorists who claim to have killed Hazaras to justice;
- **Awareness**: Of causes and implications of Hazara targeted killing; and
- **Women in Business**: Challenges of women who initiate their own business.

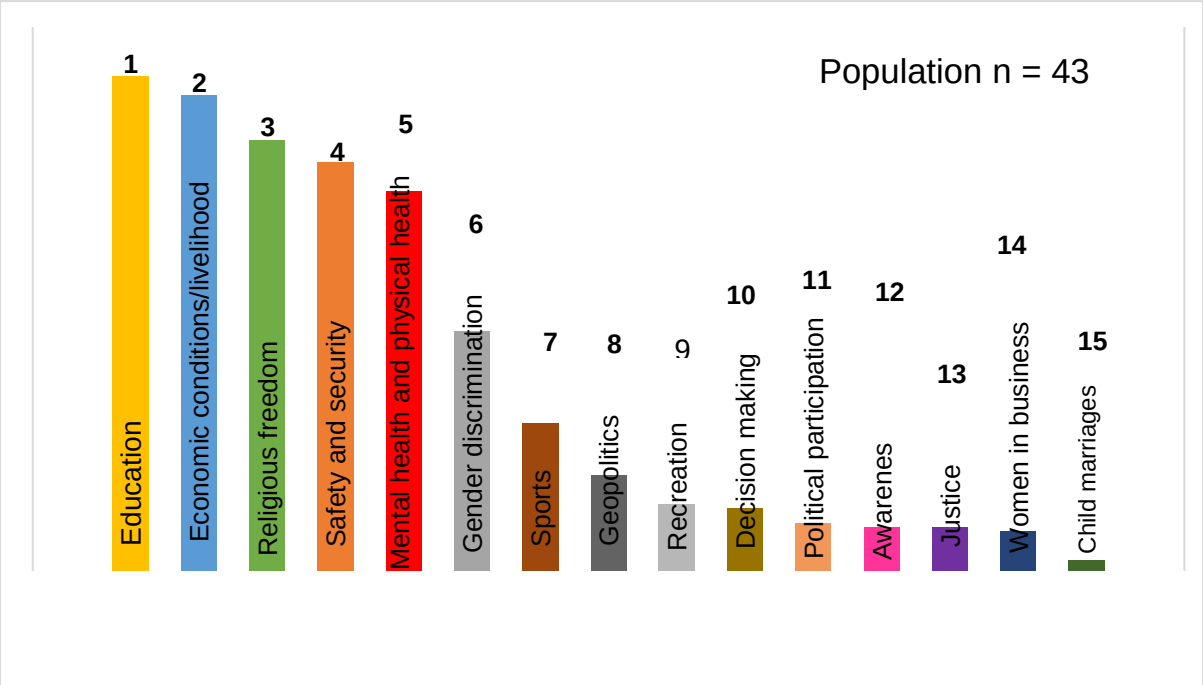
Annexe 3 – Hazara Population in Pakistan

Year	Estimated population
1971	40,000
1975	50,000–60,000
1995	100,000–120,000
2015	650,000–15,000,000

Source: (Hashmi 2016: 12).

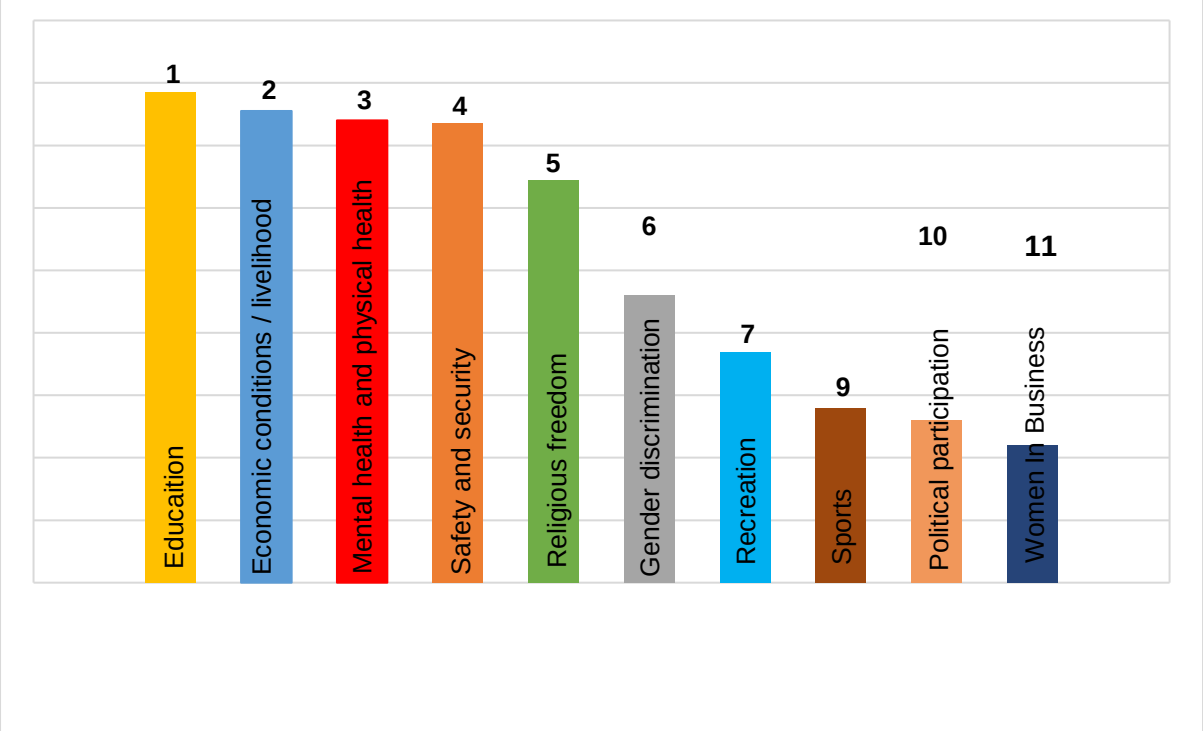
Appendix 1 – Participatory Ranking by FGDs

Figure A1: Overall ranking



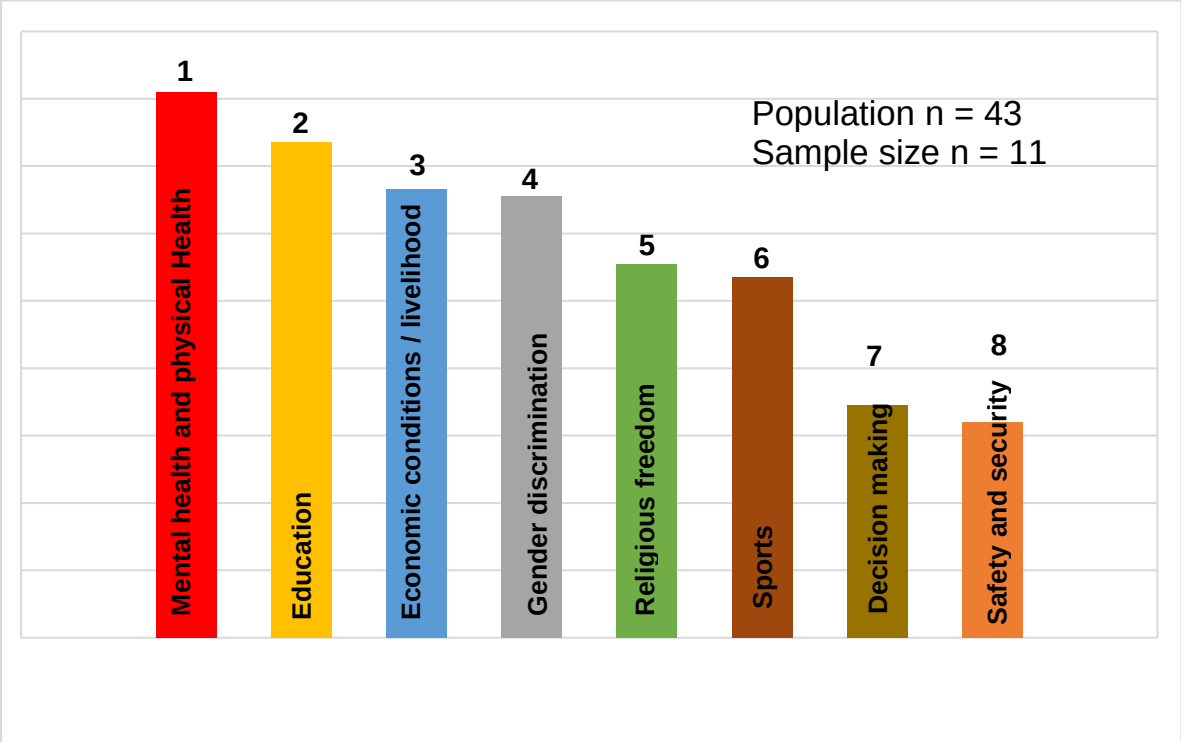
Source: Author's own.

Figure A2: Young women (FGD 1 and FGD 2)



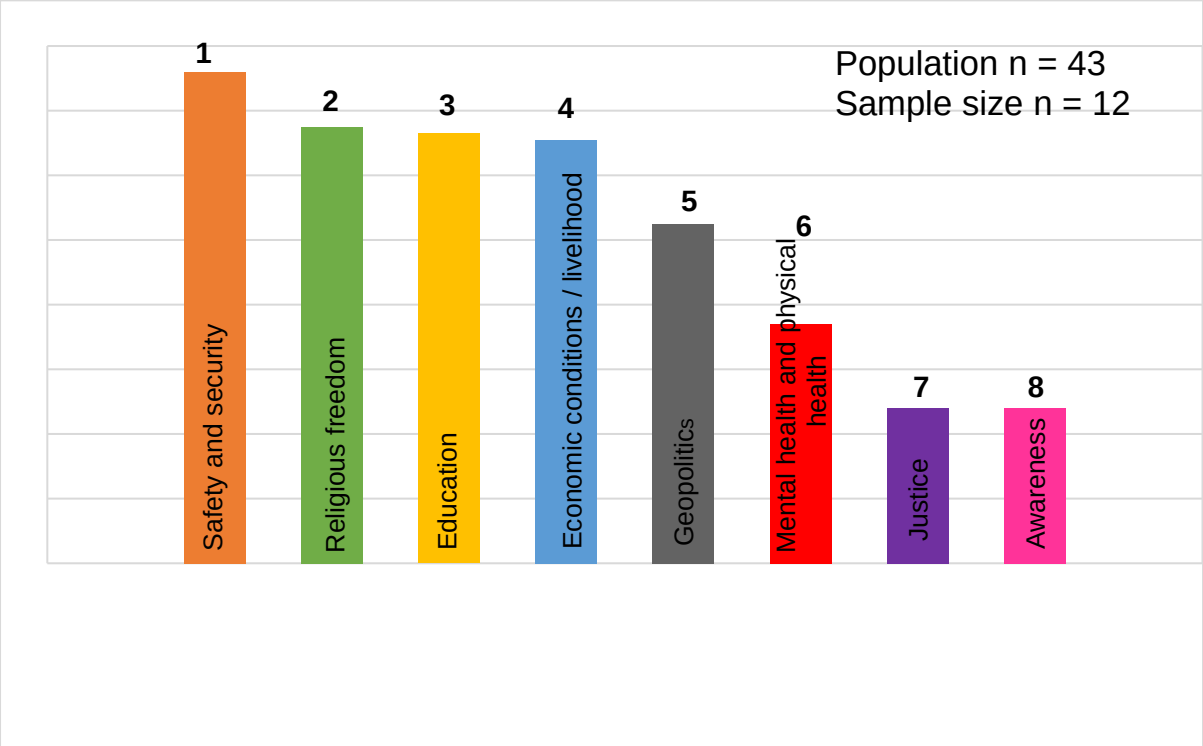
Source: Author's own.

Figure A3: Teenage girls (FGD 4 and FGD 6)



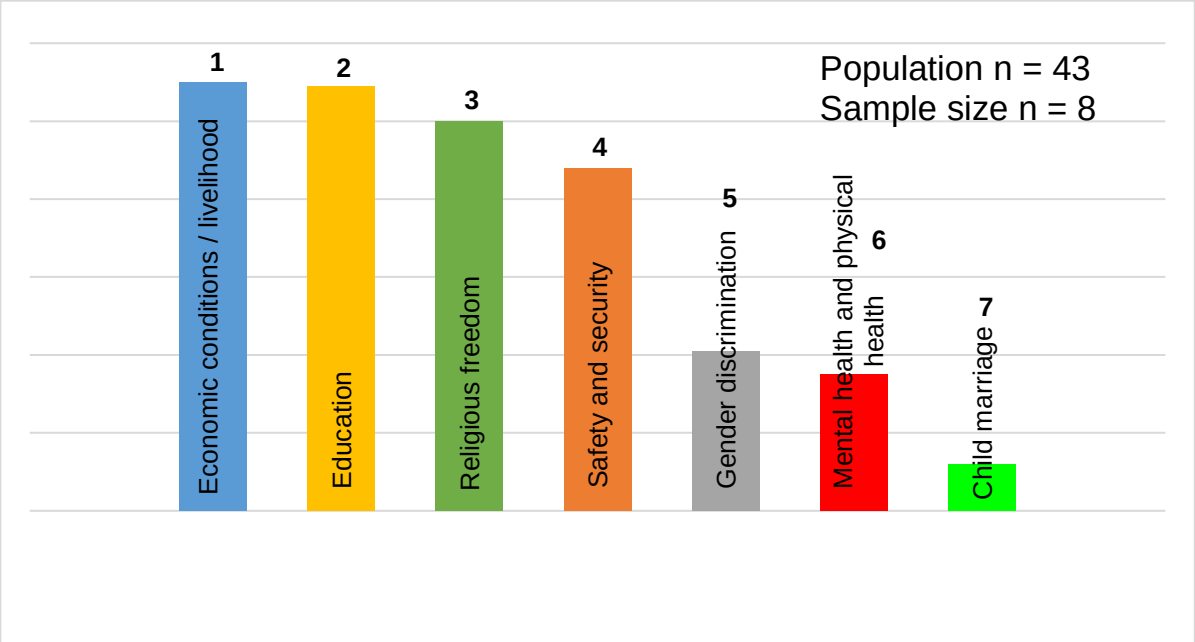
Source: Author's own.

Figure A4: Men (FGD 3 and FGD 5)



Source: Author's own.

Figure A5: Interviews with women aged 35+



Source: Author's own.

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